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Events, Opportunities

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HEADLINE	10/03 Bolt Creek fire 32% contained
SOURCE	https://www.king5.com/article/news/local/wildfire/bolt-creek-fire-human-caused/281-15147642-e49e-4fff-9eba-46a5a2414e29
GIST	SKYKOMISH, Wash. — The Western Washington Incident Management Team confirmed the Bolt Creek Fire was human-caused.

According to authorities, the fire has grown to approximately 12,486 acres and is 36% contained. The fire is continuing to spread into the Wild Sky Wilderness, primarily around Eagle Rock north of Skykomish. The exact origin and cause details are still under investigation.

Officials said [rolling material from the sky ignited unburnt fuel](#) Sunday along US 2 just beyond the 5th Street Bridge turnoff in Skykomish, which resulted in a reroute through downtown as emergency crews extinguished the flare-up.

US 2 was closed between MP 49 to MP 50 as well. The one-mile stretch that previously was closed had been reopened by about 8:45 p.m. Sunday night.

Officials anticipate infrequent and short closures to continue this week. Check the status of road closures on the [Washington State Department of Transportation's website](#).

Evacuation guidance for this fire is no longer in place for residents in both Snohomish and King counties. Residents in the area should remain alert as conditions could change quickly, and evacuations may again become necessary. [Click here for the latest evacuation information](#).

According to the Puget Sound Clean Air Agency, the fire will continue to impact air quality on Monday. The greater Seattle area will experience "good" to "moderate" air quality as the fire burns. Some areas closer to US Route 2 could also see "unhealthy for sensitive groups" air quality.

The PS Clean Air Agency also said the smoke could stick around longer because winds are staying calm.

Over the weekend, firefighters monitored the containment lines while reinforcing them as necessary. They also worked on mop-up, chipping and hazard tree mitigation in many of these areas.

In addition to the repair activities, the Burned Area Emergency Response Team (BAER) continued their watershed assessments in the fire area over the weekend.

For more information on the BAER Team's ongoing assessment of the fire area, including identifying any potential values at risk of potential post-fire flooding and deciding what emergency stabilization measures to take, [check out their Inciweb page](#).

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HEADLINE	10/04 AAA: WA average gas price \$5.32
SOURCE	https://gasprices.aaa.com/?state=WA
GIST	Today's AAA Washington Avg. \$5.326: Price as of 10/4/22 WASHINGTON AVERAGE GAS PRICES Regular Mid-Grade Premium Diesel Current Avg. \$5.326 \$5.496 \$5.687 \$5.474 Yesterday Avg. \$5.307 \$5.454 \$5.652 \$5.459 Week Ago Avg. \$5.021 \$5.121 \$5.328 \$5.447 Month Ago Avg. \$4.686 \$4.920 \$5.117 \$5.587 Year Ago Avg. \$3.847 \$4.058 \$4.229 \$3.734
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HEADLINE	10/03 Wildfire smoke a growing concern
SOURCE	https://www.q13fox.com/news/wildfire-smoke-is-becoming-a-bigger-concern-as-locals-breathe-in-moderate-air-for-weeks-on-end
GIST	KENMORE, Wash. - Wildfire smoke can expose individuals to dangerous levels of fine particulate matter, which can lodge itself in our lungs and even into our bloodstream. Locals are becoming familiarized with the onslaught of threats brought on by wildfire smoke.

On Monday, Kenmore Middle School became one of the latest schools to cancel outdoor after-school activities due to air quality concerns. That meant cross-country, soccer and tennis couldn't take place as normally scheduled.

Late in September, the Northshore School District put out a note to families noting when and why they cancel outdoor activities, citing Department of Health guidance. Athletic practices and competitions are canceled when local air quality index (AQI) levels exceed 100.

While levels were above 100 on Monday, smaller children were a few minutes away practicing youth soccer on Monday afternoon.

Patrick Gaffney, a grandfather that flew in to visit family, was among the spectators. He noted that the haze and smoke was noticeable when he arrived into town, and that his family had already planned around the smoke this week.

"We come here frequently for our grandchildren," said Gaffney. "We've been out here a number of years with bad smoke."

Wildfire smoke exposure for longer periods of time

During extreme events, warnings go out telling people to avoid getting outdoor. However, less intense days like those that we've experienced this week can build up, creating a problem with the air quality we are in week to week, month to month.

In Puget Sound, we have avoided some of the worst-case scenario days we saw in 2020. However, some communities are seeing a steady stream of 'moderate' and 'unhealthy for sensitive group' days.

According to Phil Swartzendruber, an air specialist with Puget Sound Clean Air Agency, exposure to wildfire smoke for a prolonged period can add up over time. For those living near wildfires that are burning for weeks at a time, there may be concerns about what individuals breathe in over the course of the year.

Just like there are standards that set off alarms for individual days, the federal government has standards for annual exposure – though, that math is harder to track for individual families.

"It's going to have the same health risks and health concerns for the short-term standard, but little doses for the year can add up," explained Swartzendruber. "Maybe if you're a lot closer to a fire and you're getting weeks and weeks and weeks of it, you want to consider getting some type of filtration. Try to keep your exposure down low."

The EPA has found a slew of health effects linked to short-term wildfire exposure. The risks can be minor, like coughing and difficulty breathing.

It can also lead to increased risk of emergency room visits, heart failure, heart attack or even stroke.

A bigger concern is that studies are still being looked at to determine the long-term exposure across multiple seasons. Though, the EPA lists 'reduced lung function' as a possible impact of multiple days or weeks of exposure, something that has been tracked in studies of wildland firefighters.

Wildfire smoke erasing clean air progress

Researchers at Stanford have found that there's a growing number of people being exposed to wildfire smoke in the U.S.

The data, published in Environmental Science & Technology, warns that increasing wildfire smoke could undo decades of progress from the Clean Air Act. The study warns that people in the Western U.S. are routinely being exposed to levels of pollution that carry health risks.

	<p>"We found that people are being exposed to more days with wildfire smoke and more extreme days with high levels of fine particulate matter from smoke," Dr. Marissa Childs, the lead study author said in a news release.</p> <p>Childs warned that unlike other pollutants, wildfire smoke is considered an "exceptional event" under current law – meaning the pollution people are being exposed to isn't regulated.</p>
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HEADLINE	10/04 Yemen truce in bloody civil war expires
SOURCE	https://www.upi.com/Top_News/World-News/2022/10/04/yemen-united-nations-truce-civil-war-expires/7541664860102/
GIST	<p>Oct. 4 (UPI) -- A United Nations-mediated truce in Yemen's bloody civil war has expired with neither side agreeing to extend it, as U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres vowed negotiations will move forward.</p> <p>The six-month truce expired Sunday as the United States urged the Houthis to continue "negotiations in good faith and to work with the U.N. to come to an agreement to extend the truce and keep Yemen on the path to peace," the State Department said in a statement.</p> <p>"The United States expresses its deep concern that the U.N.-mediated truce in Yemen expired on Oct. 2," the State Department said Monday. "We urge all the parties to exercise restraint during this sensitive time."</p> <p>Guterres "was disappointed to see that the parties have not agreed to the new proposal for the extension and expansion of the truce," Stephane Dujarric, spokesman for the Secretary-General, told reporters Monday. "However, negotiations are still ongoing and will continue."</p> <p>U.N. Envoy for Yemen Hans Grundberg said in a statement he "regrets that an agreement has not been reached today," and called on leaders to continue to negotiate.</p> <p>The Yemen civil war, which began in 2014 when Houthi rebels stormed the capital Sanaa, has turned the country into what the U.N. has described as "the world's worst humanitarian crisis."</p> <p>The first U.N.-mediated truce went into effect in April to "provide tangible relief to civilians," and allowed a weekly commercial international flight to resume between the Houthi-controlled Sanaa and each of Amman, Jordan and Cairo, Egypt. Fuel ships were also allowed to port in rebel-controlled Hodeida.</p> <p>The State Department called the truce "the longest period of calm since the war began, a dramatic reduction in civilian casualties, four times more fuel flowing into Yemen's northern ports and commercial flights enabling over 25,000 Yemenis to seek medical care and reunite with loved ones abroad."</p> <p>Before the deadline expired, Guterres had called for an expanded and extended truce.</p> <p>"I strongly urge the Yemeni parties to not only renew but also to expand the truce's terms and duration, in line with the proposal presented to them by my Special Envoy, Hans Grundberg," Guterres said in a statement Friday.</p> <p>In a tweet on Thursday, Grundberg said he had held "intense discussions" during the past week, and said renewal and expansion was a "humanitarian imperative and a political necessity."</p> <p>Despite Sunday's expiration, the State Department said it will continue to push for the expanded U.N. truce proposal that would provide salaries to civil servants, open roads, expand International flights and ease clearance for fuel ships entering Hudaydah port. The proposal would also launch negotiations on a "comprehensive ceasefire" and a Yemeni-led "political process that could end the war."</p>

	"The truce represents the best opportunity Yemenis have had for peace in years. The choice before the parties is simple: peace and a brighter future for Yemen, or a return to pointless destruction and suffering that will further fracture and isolate a country already on the brink," the State Department warned. "The only way to truly ease the suffering of Yemenis is through negotiation, not war."
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HEADLINE	10/03 L.A. County gas hits record high: \$6.46
SOURCE	https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2022-10-03/gas-prices-los-angeles-california-united-states
GIST	<p>Gas prices in Los Angeles County reached a record high Monday as the cost for a gallon of regular increased eight-tenths of a cent overnight to \$6.467, according to data from the American Automobile Assn. The previous high was \$6.462, set on June 14.</p> <p>California has seen the steepest gas price increases in the United States, with a rise of 59 cents in the past week to an average of \$6.38 a gallon. Only Alaska comes close, with a 54-cent increase during the same period.</p> <p>Gas prices started to creep upward in the late September, after nearly 100 days of declines. Since then, prices have climbed consistently, with drivers paying more than \$1.20 more for a gallon of regular than they had a month earlier.</p> <p>Gas prices have been increasing across the nation, but the West Coast has been hit particularly hard, with California, Alaska, Oregon, Washington, Arizona and Nevada seeing the biggest jumps in the past week.</p> <p>The stark difference has been attributed to problems at refineries affecting supply, with at least six refineries in California undergoing maintenance, and limited supply to states east of the Rockies, said Andrew Gross, a AAA spokesperson.</p> <p>Gov. Gavin Newsom has placed the blame for rising costs in California at the feet of oil companies. He said in a video on Twitter on Friday that oil companies continue to ratchet up prices and “provide no explanation” as to why.</p> <p>Newsom pointed out the stark difference in gas prices between California and the rest of the country. The national average for a gallon of regular stood at about \$3.79, or \$2.58 lower than California’s average.</p> <p>In Texas, the average hovered around \$3.09 a gallon, a drop of 3 cents from last week.</p> <p>“The degree of diversion from national prices have never happened before,” Newsom said in the video. “The fact is [oil companies] are ripping you off.”</p> <p>To offset the increases, Newsom said he was asking refineries to switch early to their winter blend gas, which is typically cheaper and could reduce prices by up to 25 cents in two weeks.</p> <p>It’s unclear how much of an actual impact that could have at the pump.</p> <p>Gas demand has been increasing in the country, from 8.32 million barrels a day last week to 8.83 million barrels a day this week, according to AAA. If demand continues to rise and supplies stay tight, AAA said, drivers could pay even more by this weekend.</p>
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HEADLINE	10/04 Decree: Ukraine talks w/Putin ‘impossible’
SOURCE	https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/zelenskiy-decree-rules-out-ukraine-talks-with-putin-impossible-2022-10-04/

GIST	<p>KYIV, Oct 4 (Reuters) - President Volodymyr Zelenskiy signed a decree on Tuesday formally declaring the prospect of any Ukrainian talks with Kremlin leader Vladimir Putin "impossible", but leaving the door open to talks with Russia.</p> <p>The decree formalised comments made by Zelenskiy on Friday after the Russian president proclaimed four occupied regions of Ukraine to be a part of Russia, in what Kyiv and the West said was an illegitimate farce.</p> <p>"He (Putin) does not know what dignity and honesty are. Therefore, we are ready for a dialogue with Russia, but with another president of Russia," Zelenskiy said on Friday.</p> <p>Ukrainian forces have broken through Russian defences in the south of the country and expanded a rapid offensive in the east, seizing back territory in areas annexed by Russia, which invaded Ukraine in February.</p> <p>Putin, who turns 70 this week, has dominated Russia's political landscape for more than two decades and could run for office two more times under constitutional reforms he presided over, potentially remaining in power until 2036.</p>
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HEADLINE	10/04 Grim winter looms as Ukraine braces
SOURCE	https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/grim-winter-looms-wartime-ukraine-braces-infrastructure-attacks-2022-10-04/
GIST	<p>KHARKIV, Ukraine, Oct 4 (Reuters) - In an abandoned tower block damaged by Russian shelling in Ukraine's second city, Olga Kobzar plans to tough out winter for as long as she can without electricity, water and central heating by lighting the gas stove in her kitchen for warmth.</p> <p>The 70-year-old, who lives alone in a devastated district of northern Kharkiv where the temperature can fall to -20 Celsius (-4 Fahrenheit), is at the sharp end of what Ukrainian officials say will be the grimmest winter in decades.</p> <p>She is the last remaining inhabitant of her tower block in the Saltivka district, around 30 km (20 miles) from the Russian border.</p> <p>Her neighbour's flat was hit and others engulfed in flames, but hers is still intact, without basic utilities.</p> <p>"It would be a sin to leave this place," she says, gesturing at shelves of old books and the portrait of her late husband she believes keeps her safe.</p> <p>The seven-month-old war has wrought huge damage to the energy network - and to residential areas in swathes of Ukraine - and officials fear Moscow could deliberately attack critical infrastructure when the frost sets in.</p> <p>Officials are urging people to stock up on everything from firewood to electric generators and fear disruptions to the centralised home-heating season that are hard to prepare for because so many different things could go wrong.</p> <p>"Not everything depends on us - a lot depends on where the missiles land and what is destroyed. The aggressors want to doom us to a cold and dark winter," Kharkiv Mayor Ihor Terekhov said.</p> <p>'PEOPLE ARE WORRIED'</p> <p>Residential areas in cities are centrally-heated by power stations fuelled by natural gas, but heating apartment blocks with smashed windows and walls is dangerous because the pipes could freeze and wreck the local system.</p>

The latest tally is 50,000 buildings and houses damaged during Russia's invasion as well as 350 of Ukraine's thousands of heating facilities, including several big ones, the minister for communities and territories development told a briefing on Monday.

Just a few blocks from Kobzar's flat, a priest, Viacheslav Koyun, is boarding up smashed windows for elderly neighbours so the heating can be turned on in their block.

"People are worried, the majority have left. We have literally five people in each stairwell. It's mainly pensioners, I've only stayed because it wouldn't be good to abandon the block and the pensioners," he says.

If there are disruptions to the heating system, electricity supplies would become vital and many people have purchased electric-powered heaters.

But the electricity network could be overwhelmed if people use their own heating equipment en masse as the devices require more power, Sviatoslav Pavlyuk, director of the Association of Energy Efficient Cities of Ukraine, said on television.

Energy officials are declining to disclose detailed data about the state of infrastructure and national energy reserves citing wartime secrecy - and possibly so as not to stir panic.

But in a rare disclosure on Saturday, energy officials said two power sub-stations in an undisclosed location in the south were "completely destroyed" by Russian attacks in late September.

'ENORMOUS DAMAGE'

Parts of Kharkiv were plunged into darkness for hours last week after Russian missiles hit a power facility, at least the second incident of its kind last month.

"The damage that has already been done to the energy system is enormous," Energy Minister German Galushchenko told Reuters last month.

Even in the western city of Lviv, which is largely untouched by the devastation of the war, the mayor has told people to stock up on wood in case of disruptions.

Ukraine, which stopped buying Russian gas in 2015 and now buys it from European countries, has natural gas in storage reserves located in its west.

If Russia halted natural gas transit via Ukraine in its escalating confrontation with the West, it would be a major challenge for Ukraine to maintain pipeline pressure to pump supplies to all its regions, energy analysts say.

In the region outside Kyiv which has not been hit by missiles in months, Halyna Sachenko, 76, says she fears there might not be enough gas where she lives.

"I bought wood, but there isn't enough for a long time - in the start of the 1990s we burnt coal, but you can't buy coal these days."

Back in Kharkiv, Kobzar says she has bigger worries than the cold: "If there's frost and it's cold, I'll stay somewhere for a bit, maybe stay with someone somehow. Most important is my son is healthy and comes home alive, I don't need anything else."

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HEADLINE	10/04 Bangladesh in blackout; power grid failure
SOURCE	https://apnews.com/article/business-bangladesh-dhaka-economic-growth-climate-and-environment-d0e03e075c0903dcfb9fa3f1cd7a3931

GIST	<p>DHAKA,Bangladesh (AP) — A failure in Bangladesh’s national power grid plunged much of the country into a blackout on Tuesday, officials said.</p> <p>Officials of the state-run Bangladesh Power Development Board said that power transmission failed somewhere in the eastern part of the country.</p> <p>All power plants tripped and electricity was cut in the capital, Dhaka, and other big cities, said Shameem Hasan, a power department spokesman.</p> <p>Engineers were trying to determine where and why the glitches happened and it could take hours to restore the system, he said.</p> <p>Bangladesh’s recent impressive economic growth has been threatened by power shortages since the government suspended operations of all diesel-run power plants to reduce costs for imports as prices have soared. The diesel-run power plants produced about 6% of Bangladesh’s power generation, so their shutdowns cut output by up to 1500 megawatts.</p> <p>Earlier this month, Faruque Hassan, president of Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association, said that the situation is so serious that garment factories are without power now for around 4 to 10 hours a day. Bangladesh is the world’s second largest garment exporter after China, and it earns more than 80% of its total foreign currency from exports of garment products each year.</p> <p>Last month, the Asian Development Bank said in a report that Bangladesh’s economic growth would slow to 6.6% from its previous forecast of 7.1% in the current fiscal year.</p> <p>Weaker consumer spending due to sluggish export demand, domestic manufacturing constraints and other factors are behind the slowdown, it said.</p>
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HEADLINE	10/03 US new \$625M aid package to Ukraine
SOURCE	https://apnews.com/article/russia-ukraine-government-and-politics-5c299481c0288a78d4f507f756ad24a7
GIST	<p>WASHINGTON (AP) — The U.S. will soon deliver to Ukraine four more of the advanced rocket systems credited with helping the country’s military gain momentum in its war with Russia.</p> <p>The High Mobility Artillery Rocket Systems, known as HIMARS, will be part of a new \$625 million package of aid expected to be announced on Tuesday, according to U.S. officials.</p> <p>The decision marks the first time the U.S. has sent more HIMARS to Ukraine since late July, and it will bring the total number delivered so far to 20. The systems have become a key tool in Ukraine’s ability to strike bridges that Russia has used to supply its troops, enabling Ukrainian forces to make inroads in Russia-controlled regions.</p> <p>The U.S. in recent weeks also provided funding through a separate program — the Ukraine Security Assistance Initiative — so another 18 HIMARS can be purchased through longer-term contracts. USAI funds are being used as part of the effort by the U.S. and Western allies to ensure Ukraine’s forces are trained and equipped to defend their country in the years to come. But those contracts will take several years to fulfill.</p> <p>The latest aid package is also expected to include other ammunition and equipment for Ukraine’s troops. Several U.S. officials spoke on condition of anonymity to provide details of the package ahead of the announcement. This is the first tranche of U.S. aid delivered in the new fiscal year, which began Oct. 1.</p> <p>Ukraine has pressed its counteroffensive in the Kherson region since the summer, relentlessly pummeling Russian supply lines and making inroads into Russian-held areas west of the Dnieper River. Ukrainian</p>

	<p>troops have been using the HIMARS to repeatedly hit the main bridge across the Dnieper and a dam that served as a second crossing. It also has struck pontoon bridges that Russia has used to supply its troops.</p> <p>Ukraine’s battlefield successes in Kherson are notable since that is one of the four areas that Russia is in the process of annexing.</p> <p>A senior U.S. military official said Monday that the attacks by Ukrainian forces have forced Russia into a “defensive crouch” in Kherson, hampering Russian efforts to resupply their frontline troops.</p> <p>The official, who briefed reporters on condition of anonymity to provide a U.S. military assessment of the war, said that so far the U.S. has seen only small numbers of Russian reinforcements coming into Ukraine in an effort to shore up their defenses. Russia has said it will mobilize upwards of 300,000 conscripts to send to Ukraine.</p> <p>The official also said that despite persistent Russian threats to use nuclear force, the U.S. has seen no moves by the Kremlin that would cause the U.S. to change its own nuclear posture.</p>
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HEADLINE	10/04 Florida residents brave slow wait for power
SOURCE	https://apnews.com/article/hurricanes-floods-florida-north-carolina-storms-5c4bcc1b7c681e916723426a705d10e6?
GIST	<p>BONITA SPRINGS, Fla. (AP) — Nearly a week after Hurricane Ian smashed into Florida and carved a path of destruction that reached into the Carolinas, more than half a million statewide residents faced another day without electricity Tuesday as rescuers continued their search for those trapped inside homes inundated with lingering floodwaters.</p> <p>At least 78 people have been confirmed dead from the storm: 71 in Florida, four in North Carolina and three in Cuba since Ian made landfall on the Caribbean island on Sept. 27, and in Florida a day later. Search and rescue efforts were still ongoing in Florida, where more than 1,600 people have been rescued statewide.</p> <p>But for many Florida residents, power restoration has become job one.</p> <p>In the town of Naples, Kelly Sedgwick was just seeing news images Monday of the devastation Ian had caused, thanks to power that was restored four days after the hurricane slammed into her southwestern Florida community. Meanwhile, in the nearby town of Bonita Springs, Catalina Mejilla was still using a borrowed generator to try to keep her kids and their grandfather cool as they waited for their power to be returned.</p> <p>Ian knocked out power to 2.6 million customers across Florida when it roared ashore with 150-mph (241-kph) winds and pushing a powerful storm surge.</p> <p>Since then, crews have been feverishly working to restore electricity infrastructure. State officials said they expect power to be restored by Sunday to customers whose power lines and other electric infrastructure is still intact.</p> <p>About 520,000 homes and businesses in Florida were still without electricity Monday evening — an amount nearly equivalent to all the customers in Rhode Island.</p> <p>For those who were getting power restored, it was a blessing. Sedgwick said she was “relieved” to have her power back and praised the crews for their hard work: “They’ve done a remarkable job.”</p> <p>But for those who were still waiting, it was a difficult slog.</p>

“The heat is unbearable,” Mejilla said. “When there’s no power ... we can’t make food, we don’t have gas.” Her mother has trouble breathing and had to go to a friend’s house who had electricity. “I think they should give power to the people who are most in need.”

Eric Silagy, Chairman and CEO of Florida Power & Light — the largest power provider in the state — said he understands the frustrations and said crews are working as hard as they can to restore power as soon as possible. The utility expects to have power restored to 95% of its service areas by the end of the day Friday, he said.

A utility spokesperson said the remaining 5% comprises mostly cases where there’s a special situation making it difficult to restore power, such as the home being so damaged it can’t receive power or the area still being flooded. Those outages do not include customers whose homes or businesses were destroyed.

Another major electricity provider in the hard-hit coastal region — Lee County Electric Cooperative — said Monday it expects to hit the 95% mark by the end of Saturday. That figure does not include barrier islands like Sanibel that are in its service area.

Power restoration is always a key challenge after major hurricanes when high winds and flying debris can topple power lines that distribute electricity to homes or in more severe storms, damage major parts of the electric infrastructure such as transmission lines or power generation.

Silagy said the utility has invested \$4 billion over the last 10 years to harden its infrastructure by doing things such as burying more power lines, noting 40% of their distribution system is now underground. The utility is also using more technology like drones that can stay aloft for hours to get a better picture of damage to the system, and sensors at substations that can alert them to flooding so they can shut off parts of the system before the water hits.

Silagy said he’s seen during Ian where those investments have paid off. On Fort Myers Beach, for example, where so many homes and businesses were wiped away, concrete utility poles remain standing, he said. Silagy said the company also didn’t lose a single transmission structure in the 8,000 miles (12,875 kilometers) they have across Florida.

Meanwhile, rescue and salvage efforts across Florida remained difficult. In DeSoto County, northeast of Fort Myers, the Peace River and tributaries reached record high levels and boats were the only way to get supplies to many of the county’s 37,000 residents.

Ian washed away bridges and roads to several barrier islands. About 130 Florida Department of Transportation trucks started work on building a temporary bridge to Pine Island and by the end of the week should be finished on a structure drivers can carefully traverse at slow speeds, Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis said during a news conference Monday.

The governor said a similar temporary bridge is planned for nearby Sanibel, but will take more time.

Elsewhere, the hurricane’s remnants, now a nor’easter, weren’t done with the U.S.

The mid-Atlantic and Northeast coasts were getting flooding rains. The storm’s onshore winds piled even more water into an already inundated Chesapeake Bay.

Norfolk and Virginia Beach declared states of emergency, although a shift in wind direction prevented potentially catastrophic levels Monday, said Cody Poche, a meteorologist with the National Weather Service in Wakefield, Virginia

President Joe Biden and first lady Jill Biden plan to visit Florida on Wednesday. The president was in Puerto Rico on Monday, promising to “rebuild it all” after Hurricane Fiona knocked out all power to the island two weeks ago.

	<p>Meanwhile, in Florida neighborhoods still without power, many residents have been sharing generators to keep things such as refrigerators cool and using outdoor grills to cook food.</p> <p>In Bonita Springs, Paula Arbuckle was sitting outside her one-story home while the sound of the generator under her carport roared. She bought a generator after Hurricane Irma slammed into this area in 2018 and left her neighborhood without power. She hasn't used it since then but after Ian knocked out the lights she's been sharing it with her next door neighbor. Arbuckle said it's hard being without power.</p> <p>"But I'm not the only one," she said. Gesturing to her neighbor's house she said: "I have a generator. They have a little baby over there. So we're sharing the generator between the two homes."</p>
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HEADLINE	10/03 Home prices biggest month drop since 2009
SOURCE	https://news.yahoo.com/us-home-prices-now-posting-040100770.html
GIST	<p>(Bloomberg) -- Home prices in the US have taken a turn and are now posting the biggest monthly declines since 2009.</p> <p>Median home prices fell 0.98% in August from a month earlier, following a 1.05% drop in July, mortgage-data provider Black Knight Inc. said in a report Monday. The two periods mark the largest monthly declines since January 2009.</p> <p>"Together they represent two straight months of significant pullbacks after more than two years of record-breaking growth," said Ben Graboske, Black Knight Data and Analytics president.</p> <p>The housing market is losing steam fast with skyrocketing mortgage rates driving affordability to the lowest level since the 1980s. The Federal Reserve has sought to curb inflation, which has thrown cold water on the US real estate boom.</p> <p>While prices are falling on a month-over-month basis, they're still significantly higher than a year earlier when the buying frenzy was going strong. Values were up 12.1% from a year earlier in August.</p> <p>The sharpest correction in August was in San Jose, California, down 13% from its 2022 peak, followed by San Francisco at almost 11% and Seattle at 9.9%, the company said.</p> <p>It's not just buyers who are stepping away from the fast-cooling market. The doubling of rates has disincentivized would-be sellers from giving up historically low rates. Inventory was on the rise from May to July but stalled in August, according to Black Knight.</p>
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HEADLINE	10/04 UK Covid wave threatens devastating winter
SOURCE	https://www.thesun.co.uk/health/19992405/new-covid-symptom-strikes-new-wave/
GIST	<p>THE most common Covid symptoms plaguing Brits have changed, experts have warned.</p> <p>It comes as a spike in cases has led some experts to warn the UK is on the brink of a "devastating" new wave this winter.</p> <p>Covid-19 infections in the UK have risen 72 per cent since last month, according to the latest figures by the ZOE app.</p> <p>There are currently an estimated 176,090 new daily symptomatic cases in the UK, while the Office for National Statistics Infection Survey suggests around 1 million people are currently infected.</p>

And where once a fever and loss of taste or smell were early warning signs of the bug, the symptom tracking app has revealed the most common symptoms have changed.

Now, [a sore throat](#) is the most common sign of Covid.

Professor Tim Spector, co-founder of the Covid ZOE app, told [The Independent](#) many people are still using the government guidelines about symptoms "which are wrong".

"At the moment, Covid starts in two-thirds of people with a sore throat.

"Fever and loss of smell are really rare now – so many old people may not think they've got Covid. "They'd say it's a cold and not be tested," he explained.

Prof Spector also early data showed new subvariants of [Omicron](#) were becoming immune-evasive and could cause the UK "real problems" as winter approaches with the NHS "already on its knees".

University of Warwick virologist, Professor Lawrence Young, also said that two Omicron subvariants – BA.2.75.2 derived from BA.2, and BQ1.1 derived from BA.5 - were showing signs of being able to escape the immune system.

However, studies have found the Omicron strain is [milder](#) than others that came before it.

"What we're finding is the virus is evolving around the immunity that's been built up through [vaccines](#) and countless infections people have had," Prof Young explained.

He also warned that the downscaling of [Covid testing](#) means the UK is "blind" to the behaviour of new potential variants of concern.

Since April 2022, most people in England [have to pay around £2 to check if they have the virus](#). "We've really taken our eye off the ball with Covid tests," he said.

"We can only detect variants or know what's coming by doing sequencing from PCR testing, and that's not going on anywhere near the extent it was a year ago.

The expert urged people to get their booster jabs, noting that the new bivalent vaccine [boosters](#) tackle multiple variants — which is 'key to preventing a devastating wave'.

Meanwhile, the Government has also called for millions of Brits to get Covid and flu vaccines before a winter "[twindemic](#)" virus surge.

The UK Health Security Agency said more than 30 million people are eligible for one or both jabs.

[NHS](#) director of vaccinations and screening, Steve Russell, said: "The vaccine is still our best protection against this difficult virus and with the number of patients in hospital with Covid-19 on the rise once again.

"I urge anyone eligible for the autumn booster to book their latest dose without delay through the NHS website or by calling 119, and help protect yourself and your loved ones this winter," he added.

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HEADLINE	10/03 UN calls on Fed halt interest rate increase
SOURCE	https://www.wsj.com/articles/u-n-calls-on-fed-other-central-banks-to-halt-interest-rate-increases-11664809202
GIST	The Federal Reserve and other central banks risk pushing the global economy into recession followed by prolonged stagnation if they keep raising interest rates, a United Nations agency said Monday.

The warning comes amid growing unease about the haste with which the Fed and its counterparts are raising borrowing costs to contain surging inflation. India's central bank Friday said that the [global economy was facing a third major shock](#) after the Covid-19 pandemic and Russia's invasion of Ukraine, in the form of aggressive rate increases by central banks in rich countries.

In its annual report on the global economic outlook, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development said the Fed risks causing significant harm to developing countries if it persists with rapid rate rises. The agency estimated that a percentage point rise in the Fed's key interest rate lowers economic output in other rich countries by 0.5%, and economic output in poor countries by 0.8% over the subsequent three years.

UNCTAD estimated that the Fed's rate increases so far this year would reduce poor countries' economic output by \$360 billion over three years, and further policy tightening would do additional harm.

"There's still time to step back from the edge of recession," UNCTAD Secretary-General Rebeca Grynspan said. "We have the tools to calm inflation and support all vulnerable groups. But the current course of action is hurting the most vulnerable, especially in developing countries and risks tipping the world into a global recession."

Fed officials in September [lifted their benchmark federal-funds rate](#) by 0.75 percentage point, the fifth consecutive rise this year, to battle U.S. inflation that is near a four-decade high. The move brought the rate to a range between 3% and 3.25%, up from near zero at the start of the year. Nearly all of the officials projected raising the rate to between 4% and 4.5% by year's end.

In a subsequent news conference, Fed Chairman Jerome Powell said the central bank does take account of the impact its policies have on the rest of the world but would continue to lift interest rates to bring inflation under control.

"We are very aware of what's going on in other economies around the world, and what that means for us, and vice versa," he said. "The forecast that we put together, that our staff puts together and that we put together on our own, always take all of that—try to take all of that into account."

The European Central Bank and the Bank of England are also [raising their key interest rates](#) more rapidly than during recent decades. According to the World Bank, more central banks raised borrowing costs in July than at any time since records began in the early 1970s.

UNCTAD said rather than increase rates, which will do little to ease shortages of energy and food, policy makers should focus on measures that target price spikes directly, including price caps funded by one-off taxes on the unusually large profits being made by many energy companies.

"Do you try to solve a supply-side problem with a demand-side solution?" asked Richard Kozul-Wright, head of the team in charge of the report, in an interview. "We think that's a very dangerous approach."

UNCTAD noted that a July agreement between Russia and Ukraine enabling more than a million tons of [grain trapped in Ukrainian silos to be exported](#) via the Black Sea had helped lower world cereal prices by 1.4%.

The U.N. agency lowered its forecast for global economic growth in 2022 to 2.5% from 2.6% in March, and said it expects growth to slow to 2.2% in 2023.

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HEADLINE	10/03 Hurricane Ian destroys swaths of Florida
SOURCE	https://abcnews.go.com/US/sanibel-island-lee-county-facing-impacts-hurricane-ian/story?id=90698639
GIST	Areas within Lee County, including Sanibel Island and Fort Myers , are facing major damage in the wake of Hurricane Ian .

Across Florida, at least 94 people have died in the storm, according to information compiled from local officials. Of those, about 54 were in Lee County, the Lee County Sheriff's Office said Saturday.

At least two people died on Sanibel Island, with Mayor Holly Smith telling "ABC News Live Prime" Friday night there were four recorded fatalities.

"This is going to be a very long recovery process," Smith said. "But right now, [the plan is] getting everybody off that island and to safety. It is not habitable."

A [video posted by Lee County Sheriff Carmine Marceno](#) Thursday afternoon showed continued flooding across Lee County as well as destruction to roads, including bridges that appear partially sunken.

"Florida Guard has about 5,000 soldiers and airmen on duty throughout the state, primarily focused right now on Lee and Charlotte Counties," Daniel Hokanson, chief of the National Guard Bureau General, told "GMA3" on Friday.

The extent of the damage is not yet known as towns wait for floodwaters to recede and search and rescue operations continue.

Destruction in Sanibel Island and other barrier islands

The barrier islands in the county were largely decimated, according to Lee County's Department of Public Safety. An ABC News team on the ground with international rescue group Project Dynamo on Friday called Sanibel "unrecognizable."

"We jumped right onto the beach near, around the middle of the island. Everything we saw was either destroyed or sustained damage," according to the ABC News team, which includes Rachel DeLima, Timmy Truong and Victor Oquendo.

Sanibel, a barrier island outside Fort Myers that's home to fewer than 7,000 residents, faced the brunt of the [storm](#) as it made landfall Wednesday afternoon.

The Sanibel Causeway, which connects the island to the mainland, and the Matlacha Pass Bridge, which connects nearby Pine Island to the mainland in Cape Coral, were destroyed and will both need rebuilds, Gov. Ron DeSantis said Friday.

With the bridges destroyed, getting people off the island is a top priority, Mayor Smith, who was on Sanibel on Friday via boat, told ABC News. First responders have been working on search and rescue operations, including going through a list of 300 residents to check in on, Smith said.

That process is difficult because it's possible individuals are leaving the island by other means, the mayor said, and there are "several areas that still our assets haven't been able to get to and get through."

"Right now, it's going to be all helicopter operations to get distribution, food supplies, medical aid, [and] people in and out of there," Hokanson of the National Guard said Friday.

Devastation across Lee County, including inland

Lee County Public Safety officials said this was the most damage they had ever seen from a storm, including the most damage they have seen at Fort Myers Beach. Beaches in the area were destroyed and images show destruction caused by the forceful movement of boats.

There was obvious destruction throughout Fort Myers from the hurricane. DeSantis said Friday that newer construction was better able to withstand the storm.

"But I'll tell you those older homes that just aren't as strong built, they got washed into the sea, some of them," the governor said. "If you were hunkering down in that, that's something that I think would be very difficult to be survivable. So, they're still trying to figure out who was home and who wasn't."

Lee County officials have asked for support for a water main break at the facility, DeSantis said. The county did not have water as of Friday and FEMA and the Army Corp of engineers were working to get the water back up and running.

President Joe Biden said Federal Emergency Management Agency Administrator Deanne Criswell spoke with Lee County Commissioner Cecil Pendergrass on Thursday to discuss ways the administration can support the county in the aftermath of Ian.

The Biden administration said it would assist with search and rescue efforts, power restoration, helping to address challenges faced by local hospitals and problems presented by damage to roads and bridges, according to a statement from the White House.

Lee and Charlotte Counties were 85% without power as of Friday morning, DeSantis said.

Rescues and fatalities

City of Sanibel officials said Thursday evening they have confirmed at least two fatalities, while Smith said Friday there could be four.

More than 500 individuals were rescued in Lee and Charlotte Counties, according to the Florida Division of Emergency Management, and search and rescue operations are continuing. There were 600-700 rescues in the county as of Saturday morning, the sheriff's office said.

The U.S. Coast Guard and Miami-Dade Fire Rescue have been involved in search and rescue efforts, including in Sanibel and Captiva. Many rescues were made in waist-high water, public safety officials said Thursday.

[Marceno said](#) Wednesday night it was clear the area had been hit very hard and there were reports of buildings being compromised. A curfew was enacted at 6 p.m. but officials were unable to enforce it.

[Storm surge](#) was a major concern with this [hurricane](#) due to the movement and conditions in the area. It is likely that some areas in southwest Florida had storm surge higher than 12 feet.

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HEADLINE	10/04 Day 223 of the Russia invasion
SOURCE	https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/oct/04/russia-ukraine-war-latest-what-we-know-on-day-223-of-the-invasion
GIST	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Russia no longer has full control of any of the four provinces of Ukraine it says it annexed last week, after Ukrainian troops reportedly advanced dozens of kilometres in Kherson province. The Russian military has acknowledged that Kyiv's forces had broken through in the Kherson region. It said the Ukrainian army and its "superior tank units" had managed to "penetrate the depths of our defence" around the villages of Zoltaya Balka and Aleksandrovka.• Earlier on Monday, Vladimir Putin's spokesperson said the Kremlin was still determining which areas of occupied Ukraine it has "annexed". Putin has vowed to protect Russia's newly claimed territories using "all means at its disposal", indicating a potential nuclear strike. The lack of a clear red line may undermine his attempts at using nuclear deterrence to halt Ukraine's successful counteroffensive and western support for Kyiv.• The Kremlin also said Russia favours a "balanced approach" to the issue of nuclear weapons that is not based on emotion. The remarks by Kremlin spokesperson Dmitry Peskov come after Ramzan Kadyrov, the Kremlin-appointed leader of the Chechnya region, said Moscow should consider using a "low-yield" nuclear weapon in Ukraine.

- **Ukraine has “fully cleared” Russian forces from the key eastern city of Lyman**, Ukraine’s President Volodymyr Zelenskiy, confirmed, a day after Moscow admitted its troops had pulled out after they were encircled.
- **Ukrainian brigades appear to have achieved their biggest breakthrough in the region since the war started**, bursting through the frontline and advancing rapidly along the Dnieper River. [Lyman’s recapture by Ukrainian troops](#) is Russia’s largest battlefield loss since Ukraine’s lightning counteroffensive in the north-eastern Kharkiv region in September.
- **President Zelenskiy said Ukraine is not just experiencing military success in Lyman, but also in Kherson**. In his [overnight statement](#), he said Ukraine forces have liberated the small Arkhanhelske and Myrolyubivka settlements in the Kherson region. Vladimir Saldo, the head of the Russian-imposed authority in the region, [admitted that Ukrainians had gained some ground](#).
- **Russia’s ministry of defence spokesperson, Igor Konashenkov, said Russian troops had occupied what he called a “pre-prepared defensive line”**. His [comments](#) are an admission that Ukraine’s southern counter-offensive is dramatically gaining pace, two months after it began.
- **Ukraine’s military has said its forces recaptured the village of Torske near Lyman in the Donetsk region on Sunday**. Russian forces who have been forced to retreat towards Luhansk’s city of Kreminna [are being hit “with fire”](#) by Ukrainian missile units, artillery and air forces, according to Serhii Cherevatyi, a spokesperson for the eastern group of Ukraine’s armed forces.
- **Elon Musk has prompted an online row with Zelensky after he asked Twitter users to weigh in on his ideas to end Russia’s war**. In a tweet, Musk suggested UN-supervised elections in four occupied regions that Moscow has falsely annexed after what it called referendums. Zelenskiy responded with his own poll. “Which @elonmusk do you like more?,” he wrote, offering two responses: one who supports Ukraine, or supports Russia.
- **The US will deliver four more of the advanced rocket systems to Ukraine**. The High Mobility Artillery Rocket Systems, known as HIMARS, will be part of a new \$625m aid package to be announced on Tuesday, according to US officials.
- **North Korea voiced support Tuesday for Russia’s annexation of areas of Ukraine that its troops occupy**, and accused the US and its allies of acting like a gangster by leading a drive at the UN against Moscow’s behaviour.
- **The lower house of Russia’s parliament, the state Duma, has approved laws on annexing four Ukrainian territories into Russia**. [No lawmakers in the lower house](#) voted against the bill to incorporate the Zaporizhzhia, Kherson, Donetsk and Luhansk regions into Russia. Lawmakers in the upper house, Russia’s federation council, are expected to formalise the illegal annexation on Tuesday.
- **The head of the Russian-occupied Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant in Ukraine has been released, according to the head of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), Rafael Grossi**. Ihor Murashov [was detained on Friday by a Russian patrol](#) as he travelled from the Zaporizhzhia plant to the town of Enerhodar, according to the state-owned company in charge of the plant.
- **Russia has put Marina Ovsyannikova, the former state TV editor who interrupted a news broadcast to protest against the Ukraine war, on a wanted list after she reportedly escaped house arrest**. The Ukrainian-born Ovsyannikova, 44, [gained international attention in March](#) after bursting into a studio of Channel One, her then employer, to denounce the Ukraine war during a live news bulletin.

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HEADLINE	10/03 Kremlin unclear which areas annexed
SOURCE	https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/oct/03/kremlin-unclear-on-which-parts-of-ukraine-it-has-annexed
GIST	<p>The Kremlin is still determining which areas of occupied Ukraine it has “annexed”, Vladimir Putin’s spokesperson has said, suggesting Russia does not know where its self-declared international borders are.</p> <p>The surprising admission came in a phone call with journalists, during which Dmitry Peskov was peppered with requests to clarify to which Ukrainian territory Putin had laid claim at a pomp-filled Kremlin ceremony last week.</p>

Putin has vowed to protect Russia's newly claimed territories using "all means at its disposal", indicating a potential nuclear strike. The lack of a clear red line may undermine his attempts at using nuclear deterrence to halt Ukraine's successful counteroffensive and western support for Kyiv.

[Putin on Friday signed four separate "treaties"](#) with the Kremlin-installed leaders of territories occupied by Russia in the Donetsk, Luhansk, Kherson and Zaporizhzhia regions.

But [Russia](#) does not control parts of those regions and is losing ground to a Ukrainian counteroffensive that retook the city of Lyman in Donetsk region on Saturday in a major embarrassment for the Kremlin.

Peskov said Donetsk and Luhansk regions in their entirety were part of Russia, despite Russia's lack of total control over their regions.

But Peskov said: "We will continue consultations with the population regarding the borders of the Kherson and Zaporizhzhia regions."

Asked for clarification on the issue, which would also define where Russia's self-declared international borders are located, Peskov said: "This is the definitive answer for now."

The annexations are not recognised by the international community.

Russia does not control large parts of Zaporizhzhia region, including the main city of the same name. Ukrainian troops are also advancing in the Kherson region, putting Russia's continued control of that city and the region west of the Dnieper River under question.

The remarks about the "annexed" territories are just the latest embarrassment for the Kremlin and its war machine. Over the weekend, several top officials and propagandists publicly criticised the senior military leadership for their inability to stop the Ukrainian advance.

"I do not know what the defence ministry reports to [Putin], but in my personal opinion, more drastic measures should be taken," wrote Ramzan Kadyrov, the leader of Chechnya, in a sharply worded post on social media following the loss of Lyman. He suggested further mobilisation of Russian society or the use of a low-yield nuclear weapon against Ukraine as a response.

Asked about Kadyrov's statements, Peskov said they were driven by emotions. "Even in difficult moments, emotions must be excluded while making assessments. We prefer to stick to well-balanced, objective assessments."

Meanwhile, Russia's first mobilisation since the second world war has been dealt another setback as regional officials reported that thousands of Russian men called up to fight had to be sent home because of mistakes in the draft.

"Out of several thousand of our compatriots who had received a summons and arrived at military enlistment offices in the past 10 days, around half were sent back home for failing to meet the selection criteria," said Mikhail Degtyarev, the governor of the far eastern Khabarovsk region.

Degtyarev said he had suspended the military commissar for the region and demanded that "any abuse [in the mobilisation process] must be stopped".

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HEADLINE	10/03 China reroutes US gas to Europe: big profit
SOURCE	https://www.wsj.com/articles/china-is-rerouting-u-s-liquefied-natural-gas-to-europe-at-a-big-profit-11664772384?mod=hp_listb_pos5

SINGAPORE—The economic slowdown in China, a Trump-era trade deal and [Europe's desperate hunt](#) for natural gas are creating a windfall for some Chinese energy companies. The unusual alignment is helping Europe stock up for the winter.

With demand down, Chinese companies that signed long-term contracts to buy U.S. liquefied natural gas are selling the excess and making hundreds of millions of dollars per cargo. Buyers include Europe, Japan and South Korea. Just 19 LNG vessels from the U.S. docked in China in the first eight months of the year, compared with 133 for the same period last year.

China is getting [nearly 30% more gas](#) from Russia so far this year, Chinese customs data show. The boost is due to a scheduled delivery increase from the Power of Siberia pipeline and from purchases of Russian LNG, typically at a steep discount, shipping data shows.

Chinese sales to Europe are too small to help the continent avoid potential shortages this winter. But they provide a possible preview of Moscow's increased reliance on Beijing. Russia turned to China for economic and political support following the invasion of Ukraine, yet Chinese companies are undercutting its effort to sow divisions in Europe by stopping gas exports.

The U.S. and China negotiated a number of long-term LNG deals amid pressure on Beijing from the [Trump administration's trade deal](#) to boost imports from the U.S. Unlike LNG contracts from other countries, U.S. LNG long-term contracts typically offer destination flexibility and their prices are indexed to the U.S. benchmark Henry Hub, which is currently a fraction of the spot market prices for LNG in Europe and Asia.

"This has been a win-win relationship for China and the U.S.," said Wei Xiong, a Beijing-based senior analyst at the consulting firm Rystad Energy. The contracts, which run up to 25 years, gave U.S. suppliers the confidence to build more multibillion-dollar LNG terminals along the Gulf Coast, boosting the country's capacity to export more gas.

China's [ENN](#) Natural Gas Co. is expected to profit from this trade when it sends the LNG tanker Diamond Gas Victoria to pick up a cargo of gas from [Cheniere Energy](#) Inc.'s plant at Sabine Pass, La., on the Gulf Coast on Oct. 18, according to three industry sources.

Instead of dispatching the tanker to China's east coast, the vessel is scheduled to deliver LNG to Europe, they said. ENN is estimated to make a profit of between \$110 million and \$130 million on this one cargo shipment, analysts said, basing their calculations on market pricing data.

[The deals that Cheniere signed](#) with ENN and Sinochem International Corp. for 0.9 million metric tons of LNG a year each came into effect in July. This year, all available cargo was resold, according to a person familiar with the deals. A LNG cargo usually ranges between 60,000 and 80,000 metric tons.

"We've resold U.S. cargo. It's allowed and the prices are favorable," said Wu Qiunan, chief economist at PetroChina International, the trading arm of state-owned China National Petroleum Corp.

In 2018, Cheniere and CNPC signed a deal for LNG that would gradually increase to 1.2 million metric tons a year within five years.

[Nippon Yusen Kaisha](#), which owns the Diamond Gas Victoria, ENN and Sinochem didn't respond to requests for comment. Cheniere said it was "pleased that we can be a reliable supplier of flexible LNG to customers at such a pivotal time."

Since 2021, U.S. suppliers and Chinese buyers [have announced 17 deals](#) for a total of around 19 million metric tons of LNG a year that are gradually coming into effect over the next five years.

In August, China received three cargoes out of Sakhalin-2, an oil and gas project that includes LNG production in Russia's Far East, according to shipping data from S&P Global. People in the market say

they were bought at a steep discount from the spot market price by Chinese state-owned energy companies.

Sakhalin Energy didn't respond to a request for comment.

Chinese imports of U.S. LNG fell 84% since the war in Ukraine began, as Chinese demand slumped due to Covid-19 lockdowns while European demand sent spot-market prices upward.

Estimating the profit Chinese companies are currently making is difficult. Deals are private, companies could be reselling both long-term cargoes as well as spot cargoes bought in advance and cargo can pass through the many hands during the trading process, even while the vessels are at sea.

Still, there is data that offers a glimpse into the scope. For 2022, China has 72 million tons of long-term contracted LNG but is predicted to only need 66 million tons, according to data firm ICIS.

This leaves China with a few million tons it can resell on the global spot market. Customs data shows that for the first eight months of the year, China exported around a quarter million metric tons of LNG worth \$449 million to Europe and Asia, up from \$7.3 million last year.

The data is likely incomplete because LNG prices are higher this year and the trading entities aren't necessarily based in the countries where LNG is loaded or received.

Whether Chinese players can continue to profit from the current situation is unclear. Projections for China's LNG demand this winter are muted amid uncertainty over whether Beijing will loosen its Covid policies and China's own increased domestic gas production.

The current opportunities for Chinese companies may decline in the next few years with new LNG supply coming from Africa, North America and the Middle East, says Alex Siow, lead analyst for LNG at ICIS. "We should always be wary of the boom-and-bust cycle."

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HEADLINE	10/03 Ian worsens Florida housing crisis
SOURCE	https://www.washingtonpost.com/nation/2022/10/03/hurricane-ian-housing/
GIST	<p>ESTERO, Fla. — The billions of dollars in damage caused by Hurricane Ian has exacerbated an already urgent housing crisis for Florida, with thousands of displaced residents unsure where they'll live in one of the country's most expensive states.</p> <p>On Monday, about 1,700 people remained in emergency shelters, many of them evacuated before their homes were either leveled by the 150 mph winds or rendered uninhabitable by a storm surge that flooded large portions of the state — leaving nearly 850,000 residents still without power five days after the hurricane made landfall. Others were living temporarily with family or friends, while some with few options remained in squalid conditions inside damaged houses.</p> <p>In a state of luxury high-rise condominium developments and multimillion-dollar homes with stunning views of the surrounding waterfront, the hardest hit will be residents on fixed incomes and working poor families who make up the backbone of Florida's economy, affordable housing advocates said.</p> <p>"It's a tragedy for them and it's also a tragedy for the entire community, which has already been suffering from not having people able to live where they work," said Jamie Ross, president and CEO of the Florida Housing Coalition, which earlier this year estimated that there is a statewide deficit of 500,000 homes that are affordable to lower- and middle-income families.</p> <p>"We were already in a crisis before Ian came along," she said.</p> <p>State officials said 68 people died as a result of the storm, a toll that they said included two deaths from Charlotte County. Officials there, however, said 23 people were directly or indirectly killed by the</p>

storm. Authorities have said they expected the number to rise as more searches and autopsies are completed.

The breadth of the problem for survivors was on display inside the Hertz Arena entertainment center in Estero, now one of several congregate shelters operating in the state for hurricane victims.

Several hundred people milled around or lay on donated inflatable mattresses inside the stadium that is normally home to the Florida Everblades minor league ice hockey team.

A family of five camped out near one of the beer stands while more huddled near a chrome statue of a hockey player brandishing his stick. Everywhere were the sounds of barking dogs or babies crying — mixed with the heavy odor of a crowd of people who had not bathed since Ian leveled their communities last week.

Peggy Delaney, 71, had taken refuge with her three cats in one of the stadium bleachers, just above where a girl cuddled with a stuffed elephant on a mattress her family had placed in the penalty box area of the emptied-out ice rink.

“\$169 a night!? I can’t afford that,” Delaney said out loud while scrolling through Airbnb options on her iPad.

She arrived to the arena Friday after being rescued from the condominium in Fort Myers she and a friend bought in June. On Wednesday, during the storm, she watched as three feet of water seeped into her unit — enough to upend her refrigerator and an antique dresser.

Now, with no place else to go and Social Security checks making up most of her income, the retired office administrator feels trapped in a different way.

She’s waiting to learn whether her homeowner’s insurance will cover the damage to the condominium, and whether the flood insurance claim she filed with the Federal Emergency Management Agency that morning will lead to temporary housing.

“They said that within 20 days they may be able to put me up somewhere,” Delaney said, referring to FEMA. “I’m hoping prices come down so I can buy something, but I’m afraid we won’t get money out of our condo now.”

Pausing, she added: “I haven’t been able to cry until I got here.”

Out in the lobby, Oscar Garcia stared at nothing in particular while sitting on his inflatable mattress. His wife, Irene Garcia, swept away some trash near their three children — ages 2, 10 and 15.

Oscar Garcia, 32, said their apartment in Fort Myers Beach was completely flooded when they returned after the storm. Mold was already accumulating on the walls and nothing else was salvageable, he said.

They were paying \$1,200 a month for that home, a price that was already a stretch, said Garcia, a warehouse worker for a roofing company. The last time he looked, monthly rents for comparably sized apartments in the area were running at about \$2,000.

“I’ve called everyone I could think of for help” with housing options, he said. “You can only make so many calls.”

Jeannette Morris, 70, had a different problem. She was already homeless when Ian struck, a situation that began in June after the rent for the single-wide trailer she’d been staying in increased to \$1,000 per month from \$728. Now, as she saw it, everyone around her was more competition for the limited low-income housing options she’s been applying for.

While living on Social Security for several years, Morris said, “I was terrified of being homeless and now look at me.”

“But I’m not alone now,” she added with a rueful laugh while gesturing to the displaced families around her. “I’ve got lots of company. Lots and lots of company.”

Housing experts say the scramble for new homes will likely drive up prices in an already overheated real estate market.

In some areas of southwest Florida, homes not affected by the storm were still renting for as much as \$5,000 per month, while two-bedroom apartments cost \$2,000 per month.

Even people not sucked into the storm’s wreckage will in some way be affected, said Chelsea Plaisance, lead organizer for Lee Interfaith for Empowerment, an affordable housing advocacy group in the Fort Myers area, which suffered the heaviest toll in hurricane damage.

“Anyone in the rental market is going to see prices go up because of all the other people who will now be entering the rental market,” Plaisance said. “It’s going to push out an entire group of people who were already marginalized.”

Kristen Santero, 50, doesn’t consider herself in that category. But after five feet of water flooded into the beachfront home in the Island Park area of Fort Myers that she and boyfriend David DiGiacomo had just renovated after buying it in April, Santero also wasn’t sure what their options were.

They moved in with some friends just before the storm hit. But with three cats, a dog and five kids between them, they weren’t sure how long that situation would last.

“Honestly, I don’t have a super positive outlook on being able to find something,” said Santero, who was expecting a battle for insurance money after filing a flood insurance claim earlier in the week. “You’re looking at thousands of people who are trying to find displacement housing. I think it’s going to be very difficult.”

For some, the damage their homes suffered due to the hurricane has left them with few options.

That was the case inside the Orange Harbor Mobile Home and RV Park, a “55 plus community” in Fort Myers Shores with 365 trailers — 90 percent of which were either damaged or destroyed when the nearby Caloosahatchee River flooded the area.

The water, and a foul-smelling black mud that washed in with it, tipped over refrigerators, chewed through wooden floors and inundated electrical outlets. The storm also compromised the park’s water supply and sanitary system.

Located on a spit of land between the Caloosahatchee and the Orange River, Orange Harbor had given many of its residents a life that they say they probably won’t be able to replicate elsewhere.

Many properties had docks, and it was just an hour-long boat ride to the Gulf of Mexico. During winter, manatees migrate to the mangrove forest that surrounds the community. Orange Harbor is also within 1 mile of Interstate 75, western Florida’s biggest north-south route, and many residents said they located there to be closer to family members who live throughout Florida.

Before the storm, developers had been pressuring Orange Harbor homeowners to sell the property, which would have allowed many of them to make a windfall.

Timothy and Susan Paul, who are shareholders in the homeowners association, said one developer recently offered to buy the property for \$84 million.

But homeowners voted 100-45 not to sell the land, Susan Paul, 71, said.

The hurricane hit just five days after Susan Paul retired from her job as a chief custodian at Fort Myers High School.

With their trailers now destroyed, the couple and several other residents said they are considering moving farther inland to areas of Florida that are already experiencing rapid population growth.

“There are a lot of nice places in the central part of the state, around Orlando,” said Timothy Paul, 77. “And it’s probably cheaper — Fort Myers has gotten very expensive through the years, and it’s kind of the point, for people, you just can’t live here.”

Most Orange Harbor residents do not have insurance because, they say, insurers do not offer policies for older mobile homes.

Some said they plan to walk away from their property, forgoing a dream to retire without debt. Other residents continue to live in their trailers, choosing to endure the lack of a functioning sanitary system because, they say, they don’t think they can start over again in Florida’s unforgiving housing market.

Gail Stagner, 72, paid \$18,000 for her trailer three years ago, a move that allowed her to leave renting behind and cut down her hours as a paralegal to four days a week.

Now, with river mud clinging to most of her belongings, she’s ready for someone to haul her trailer away and go back to renting, she said.

“But rent is sky high, so I just don’t know,” Stagner said. “Maybe I will just go back to working five days a week.”

Bob Lawley, 69, puffed on cigarettes while on his golf cart to stay away from the stifling heat inside his trailer, where the carpets were still soaked from the flood.

Lawley moved from suburban Philadelphia into his trailer in April, after he paid \$30,000 for it.

Partially paralyzed after he fractured vertebrae during a fall, he said he has \$13,000 in savings, which isn’t enough to start over.

“My plan is to stay because I like the river, and I go down in my cart and watch the sunset,” he said. “If I went back to Philadelphia, I think that cold would kill me.”

As his wife bathed him in a bucket in front of their trailer, Charlie Dupont couldn’t get over how quickly Ian changed his life.

Three days before the storm made landfall, Dupont, 84, and his wife, Mary Ellen, 71, were ready to close on a \$147,000 offer someone made to buy the trailer they’d spent three years fixing up, a ticket to the bigger home they often fantasized about.

Now, that deal is likely dead, Dupont said, stinging from the reversal of fortune.

The couple appeared torn about where they’d live next. She wants to stay in Florida, saying “Good, bad or indifferent, you will never get me to leave.”

He said he’s open to the idea of trying their luck somewhere else.

“If it had sold, it would have been perfect for us,” Dupont said about the trailer, as his wife attempted to scrape his back clean of the sticky mud that seemed to be everywhere. “But then whammo! And now I don’t know why God hates us so much.”

HEADLINE	10/03 What next for Atlantic hurricane season?
SOURCE	https://www.washingtonpost.com/climate-environment/2022/10/03/hurricane-season-end-date-ian/
GIST	<p>The 2022 Atlantic hurricane season is far from over.</p> <p>Even as former Hurricane Ian lost its tropical characteristics over the weekend in the Mid-Atlantic, its remnants stalled offshore leaving behind stormy weather that may not relent until midweek. Meanwhile, forecasters are closely tracking disturbances at risk of developing in the Caribbean and off the coast of Africa.</p> <p>Ian's destructive landfalls in Cuba, southwest Florida and South Carolina, along with Hurricane Fiona's rampage before that, helped bring a relatively quiet hurricane season closer to an average one.</p> <p>The shift into overdrive is expected to continue. Researchers at Colorado State University warn that "well above-median October-November" activity is expected in the Caribbean — a sign that North America should closely monitor the next several weeks for tropical threats.</p> <p>Atlantic hurricane season doesn't officially conclude until Nov. 30, and fierce storms have occurred in recent years in the season's final eight weeks, including Hurricane Zeta, which struck Louisiana in 2020, and Sandy in 2012 over the Northeast.</p> <p>Systems to watch</p> <p>There are two systems to watch in the Atlantic — one that bears close watching for interests in the Caribbean and Gulf of Mexico, and another off the coast of Africa.</p> <p>Caribbean system</p> <p>On Monday morning, an area of showers and thunderstorms was about 1,000 miles east of the Windward Islands. It's set to cross the Lesser Antilles on Thursday and may gradually develop. The National Hurricane Center estimates a 40 percent chance of eventual organization into at least a tropical depression or storm.</p> <p>High pressure over the southern United States and Gulf of Mexico would probably prolong its westward journey, keeping it in the Caribbean for at least the next seven to nine days. Given that the system has yet to develop, more detailed forecasts aren't possible.</p> <p>Africa system</p> <p>A second tropical wave is due south of the Cabo Verde islands. It will probably consolidate in the next 48 to 72 hours and become a named storm as it curves northward. It could be shunted west by the Azores High and sneak into the central Atlantic. If this occurs, it will receive the name Julia but should remain away from land.</p> <p>Looking ahead</p> <p>On Friday, Philip Klotzbach, a hurricane researcher at Colorado State University, released his team's two-week sub-seasonal hurricane outlook. He called for a 55 percent chance of above-average activity through Oct. 12, and only a 5 percent chance of activity coming in below average.</p> <p>He attributes the prediction for above-average activity to Ian having been a factor early in the forecast period, but notes that two other systems bear watching.</p> <p>"[Weather models] have much more vigorous support than yesterday for development of a tropical wave that has recently exited the coast of West Africa," he wrote. "Both model ensembles indicate potential development in the Caribbean in about ~10 days as well."</p>

	<p>In taking stock of how active a hurricane season is, atmospheric scientists refer to ACE — or Accumulated Cyclone Energy. That’s a metric based on a storm’s intensity and duration. It attempts to quantify, albeit loosely, how much energy storms extract from warm sea waters and expend on their winds.</p> <p>In late August, the Atlantic Basin stood at barely 10 percent of average ACE. Then Fiona, which left behind serious wind and flood damage in Puerto Rico, sideswiped Bermuda and slammed into the Canadian Maritimes, spinning up 26.3 ACE units — about as much as had been tallied to date in the season by the preceding five storms.</p> <p>Ian wrangled up 17.4 units, bringing the seasonal ACE total to 79.1. The average for early October is 95.5, so this year is at about 83 percent of average. But the second half of September produced more ACE than all but five other seasons since 1950, according to Klotzbach. September, as a whole, generated more ACE than 2020 and 2021, both very busy years, Klotzbach tweeted.</p>
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HEADLINE	10/03 Rising Europe infections prompt US worries
SOURCE	https://www.usnews.com/news/national-news/articles/2022-10-03/increasing-coronavirus-infections-in-europe-prompt-concerns-over-future-u-s-wave
GIST	<p>Coronavirus cases are rising across some European countries, increasing worries over the possibility of another wave in the U.S.</p> <p>Fifteen countries in the region are reporting increasing cases. It’s the first spike in coronavirus cases across the region since the most recent BA.5 wave began, according to a report from the European Center for Disease Prevention and Control.</p> <p>The highest two-week new infection rates are in Austria, France, Germany, Latvia and Liechtenstein.</p> <p>However, overall rates of hospital or intensive care unit indicators in the region decreased or remained stable, the report found.</p> <p>The report also found that less than 7% of people in the region have gotten a second COVID-19 booster shot. It’s a higher rate than what the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention is reporting for the U.S.</p> <p>Officials have tried to push the shots ahead of expected fall and winter waves of COVID-19. They are hopeful that the updated booster shots in the U.S., which target omicron subvariants BA.4 and BA.5 as well as the original coronavirus strain, will be better at preventing infections at a time when many Americans are seeing waning levels of immunity.</p> <p>But it isn’t clear whether enough Americans will take the shots for them to make a substantial difference. According to a recent Kaiser Family Foundation poll, nearly half of Americans do not plan to get the updated booster. In fact, about half of the U.S. reports hearing little to nothing about the new shots, according to the survey.</p> <p>Still, coronavirus cases in the U.S. remain on the decline since the latest peak at nearly 130,000 new cases on average each day in mid-July. The daily average of new cases has dropped to below 43,000 as of Sunday, according to CDC data.</p> <p>But if the increase in cases in Europe is any indication – which it typically has been during the pandemic – the decline could reverse soon. Some models predict that it will happen as soon as this month.</p>
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HEADLINE	10/04 Russia retreat: signs of disarray
SOURCE	https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/03/world/europe/russia-disarray-ukraine.html

GIST

IZIUM, Ukraine — Russian forces in Ukraine were on the run Monday across a broad swath of the front line, as the Ukrainian military pressed its blitz offensive in the east and made gains in the south, belying President Vladimir V. Putin's claims to have absorbed into Russia territories that his armies are steadily losing.

Following the capture over the weekend of Lyman, a strategic rail hub and gateway to the eastern Donbas region, Ukrainian forces showed no sign of stopping, pushing eastward toward the city of [Lysychansk](#), which Russia seized three months ago after bloody fighting. Any loss of territory in the Donbas undermines Mr. Putin's objectives for the war he launched in February, which has focused on seizing and incorporating the region.

The Kremlin reflected the disarray of its forces on the ground, where territory was rapidly changing hands, acknowledging that it did not yet know what new borders Russia would claim in southern Ukraine. "In terms of the borders, we're going to continue to consult with the population of these regions," Mr. Putin's spokesman, Dmitri S. Peskov, told reporters on Monday.

The military conscription Mr. Putin ordered on Sept. 21 to bolster his battered forces [has set off nationwide turmoil and protest](#), bringing the war home to many Russians who had felt untouched by it. Many men have been drafted who were supposed to be ineligible based on factors like age or disability.

On Monday, the governor of the Khabarovsk region in the Far East said that half of the men called up there, numbering in the thousands, should not have been drafted and had been sent home and that the region's military commissar had been dismissed.

Mr. Putin had meant for Monday to be a triumphant day in Moscow, where the lower house of Russia's rubber-stamp Parliament, the State Duma, voted unanimously to ratify his proclaimed annexation of four Ukrainian regions after sham referendums there.

But events on the battlefield threatened to make a mockery of such declarations, as Ukrainians continued to recapture blasted, largely depopulated cities and towns from the retreating Russians. North of Lyman, the village of Pisky-Radkivski, retaken last week, was littered with burned-out Russian tanks, abandoned Russian gear and the decomposing body of a Russian soldier on Monday.

Ukraine claimed on Monday to have destroyed a Russian armored column near the village of Torske in the Donetsk region, east of Lyman and just 20 miles from Lysychansk. The attack left roads in the dense pine forest cluttered with burned tanks and armored vehicles, said Vladyslav Podkich, a Ukrainian military spokesman.

The attack could not be independently verified, but Russian officials admitted setbacks in the area, saying that Ukrainian forces had crossed into the Luhansk region for the first time in months, and had set up positions closer to Lysychansk. Donetsk and Luhansk, collectively known as the Donbas, are two of the four regions Moscow now claims as Russian territory.

Piled into the back of an army truck, heading down the road to new positions near Lyman, a company of Ukrainian and foreign soldiers were ebullient over the Russian retreat.

"We broke their lines and have been pursuing them since," said the unit's commander, a 26-year-old American volunteer who gave his name as Rob Roy, and uses the code name Borys. "Basically," he added, "we shattered them."

Ukrainian soldiers have encountered hungry, poorly outfitted Russian troops, some with little weaponry to defend themselves.

"Lots of times they were wearing flip-flops, malnourished," Mr. Roy said.

Two Russian soldiers his unit found had only one gun between them. At another abandoned Russian position, he said, they found graffiti apparently left behind by fleeing soldiers that used a slur to describe their commander.

“It does not scream of a well mobilized army,” he said. “My feeling is they don’t want to be here.”

Hundreds of miles away in the south, Ukrainian forces have also begun to move, pushing deeper into the Kherson region, in what a senior Ukrainian military official described as the beginning of the active phase of a monthslong offensive operation.

Russia’s Defense Ministry acknowledged on Monday that Ukrainian tank units had penetrated its line of defense in part of the region, a fertile part of southern Ukraine that Russian forces seized in the first weeks of the war.

A Russian-installed official in the region, Kirill Stremousov, said that Ukrainian troops had advanced along the Dnipro River in the direction of the Russian-held regional capital of Kherson, but insisted that “the situation is completely under control.”

Russia’s troops are in a precarious position in the Kherson Region. The bulk of the Kremlin’s forces are deployed west of the broad Dnipro, in and around the city of Kherson, while their supplies and logistical support are mostly on the river’s east bank.

Ukrainian forces have largely destroyed the crucial bridges needed to continue to supply troops with ammunition and equipment. Though the Russians are well dug in after many months in control of the territory, a concerted attack could tax their limited supply lines and possibly force — and complicate — a retreat across the river.

In the Zaporizhzhia region, where the security of Europe’s largest nuclear power plant has become an issue of international concern, Russian forces released the plant’s director, the International Atomic Energy Agency said on Monday, three days after they detained him. Russian troops seized control of the plant early in the war but it continues to be run by its Ukrainian staff, under what Ukrainian officials describe as a brutal occupation.

Also on Monday, Danish officials and the Nord Stream pipeline company said that natural gas had stopped spewing from the damaged pipes below the Baltic Sea linking Russia to Germany. The pipes ruptured last week in what was widely described as an act of sabotage, though no evidence has yet emerged about who was to blame.

Despite Ukraine’s recent gains, Russian forces still control about one-sixth of Ukrainian territory, including the areas they and their proxies seized in 2014. Moscow still holds the advantage in firepower and has threatened the use of a nuclear weapon to defend what it now calls Russian territory, and it has demonstrated repeatedly that it can rain destruction on Ukraine. On Monday, Ukrainian officials said a Russian strike on a hospital in Kupiansk, in the Kharkiv region, had killed a doctor and wounded a nurse.

Analysts have said the Ukrainian military risks stretching itself too thinly as it advances, becoming vulnerable to counterattack. Fighting in the east has been so fast-paced, soldiers from several Ukrainian brigades said in interviews, that they do not know where they will be deployed day to day.

The senior Ukrainian military official, who spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss military planning, cautioned that success in the south, as well as other theaters, was contingent on “a million” factors that could not always be predicted. The official said that it was important to view military operations in particular theaters not as independent from one another, but as elements of a single strategic offensive operation.

“All offensive actions in the last few weeks are playing out within the framework of a unified design,” the official said. “For sure, there are decisions that are made outside the general plan on the basis of changes in conditions. This is called flexibility in command and control.”

In Washington, a senior Pentagon official on Monday cited the Ukrainian military’s “stunning success” in pushing Russian forces back in the Kharkiv region in the northeast, in capturing Lyman and in making progress in Kherson.

Celeste Wallander, the assistant secretary of defense for international security affairs, said Ukraine’s offensive in the south was particularly significant, blocking Russia from advancing along the Black Sea coast into southwestern Ukraine.

“That will be both a major defeat for Russia because it means it pushes back even more Russia’s ambition to take Odesa, which was one of the stated objectives earlier this year,” said Ms. Wallander, a Russia specialist, speaking at the Center for Strategic & International Studies, a policy research group. “It becomes that much harder, and it gives Ukraine a much better defensive position to ride out what probably will be a tamping down of the hot fighting over the winter.”

Amid the Kremlin’s efforts to legitimize an illegal annexation that no other country has recognized, officials were still struggling to explain their continued losses at the front. Ramzan Kadyrov, the strongman leader of the southern Russian republic of Chechnya and a close Putin ally, over the weekend blamed the Russian military leadership in a remarkable instance of public infighting within the ruling elite.

Mr. Kadyrov has sought to make himself indispensable to the Kremlin by sending thousands of Chechen fighters to Ukraine, while styling himself as operating separately from the Russian Defense Ministry and answering only to Mr. Putin himself.

“Of course, even in difficult moments, emotions should be kept out of any assessments,” Mr. Peskov, Mr. Putin’s spokesman, said on Monday in response, an indication of the sensitivity of Mr. Kadyrov’s comments.

Taken together, the day’s events in Moscow showed that Mr. Putin’s political system is under growing strain — even though there was no evidence the president’s own grip on power was under threat.

After lawmakers in the Duma voted in favor of Mr. Putin’s annexation, one of them delivered a speech blasting the government for lacking the resources to properly outfit its soldiers.

“It’s a disgrace,” said Sergei Mironov, a senior, hawkish lawmaker. “What is this? The greatest country in the world cannot provide everything that’s necessary.”

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HEADLINE	10/03 Systemic abuse of players in women soccer
SOURCE	https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/03/sports/soccer/us-soccer-abuse-nwsl.html
GIST	<p>One coach called in a player to review game film and showed her pornography instead. Another was notorious at the highest levels of women’s soccer for alternately berating his players and then quizzing them about their sex lives.</p> <p>A third coach coerced multiple players into sexual relationships, behavior that one top team found so disturbing that it fired him. But when he was hired by a rival team only a few months later, the original club, which had documented his behavior in an internal investigation, said nothing. Instead, it publicly wished him well in his new post.</p> <p>Those details and others fill a highly anticipated investigative report into abuse in women’s soccer that found sexual misconduct, verbal abuse and emotional abuse by coaches in the game’s top tier, the National Women’s Soccer League, and issued warnings that girls face abuse in youth soccer as well.</p>

The report was published Monday, a year after players outraged by what they saw as a culture of abuse in their sport demanded changes by [refusing to take the field](#). It found that leaders of the N.W.S.L. and the United States Soccer Federation — the governing body of the sport in America — as well as owners, executives and coaches at all levels failed to act on years of voluminous and persistent reports of abuse by coaches.

All were more concerned about being sued by coaches or about the teetering finances of women's professional soccer than player welfare, according to the report, creating a system in which abusive and predatory coaches were able to move freely from team to team at the top levels of women's soccer.

“Our investigation has revealed a league in which abuse and misconduct — verbal and emotional abuse and sexual misconduct — had become systemic, spanning multiple teams, coaches and victims,” Sally Q. Yates, the lead investigator, wrote in the report's executive summary. “Abuse in the N.W.S.L. is rooted in a deeper culture in women's soccer, beginning in youth leagues, that normalizes verbally abusive coaching and blurs boundaries between coaches and players.”

Last year, U.S. Soccer commissioned Yates, a former deputy attorney general, and the law firm King & Spalding to look into the sport after [reports in The Athletic](#) and [The Washington Post](#) detailed accusations of sexual and verbal abuse against coaches in the women's league. After the news media reports, and after games were postponed as furious [players protested publicly](#), league executives [resigned and were fired](#). Within weeks, half of the 10-team league's coaches had been linked to allegations of abuse, and some of the world's top players had recounted their own stories of mistreatment.

Cindy Parlow Cone, the U.S. Soccer president and a former member of the national team, [called the findings](#) “devastating and infuriating.” Cone said there are “systemic failures within soccer that must be corrected,” and that the federation would immediately implement a number of the report's recommendations.

The report made a lengthy list of recommendations that it said should be adopted by U.S. Soccer, and in some cases the women's league, including making a public list of individuals suspended or barred by U.S. Soccer, meaningfully vetting coaches when licensing them, requiring investigations into accusations of abuse, making clear policies and rules around acceptable behavior and conduct, and hiring player safety officers, among other requirements.

The report also raises the question of whether some team owners should be disciplined or forced to sell their teams, as it recommended the league “determine whether disciplinary action is appropriate for any of these owners or team executives.”

Even with so much of the worst abuse publicly known, the Yates report is stunning in how meticulously it details how many powerful soccer officials were told about abuse and how little they did to investigate or stop it. Among those whose inaction is detailed are a former U.S. Soccer president; the organization's former chief executive and women's national team coach; and the leadership of the Portland Thorns, one of the league's most popular and best-supported teams.

“Teams, the league and the federation not only repeatedly failed to respond appropriately when confronted with player reports and evidence of abuse, they also failed to institute basic measures to prevent and address it,” Yates wrote. She added that “abusive coaches moved from team to team, laundered by press releases thanking them for their service,” while those with knowledge of their misconduct stayed silent.

In a statement, the women's league [said](#) in the report, and an investigation it is undertaking with the players' union, “will be critical to informing and implementing systemic reform and ensuring that the N.W.S.L. is a league where players are supported, on and off the pitch.” The players' union [said](#) in a statement that players who had spoken to investigators “have shown profound courage and bravery, and we stand with them.”

The national team players association [released a statement](#) saying it was “dismayed” that some clubs and U.S. Soccer staff “impeded the investigation,” and urged U.S. Soccer to implement the report’s recommendations. National team players largely did not respond publicly to the report, as they were on a plane to London for a match against England as the report was released.

The report said the sport does little to train athletes and coaches about harassment, retaliation and fraternization. It noted that “overwhelming” numbers of players, coaches and U.S. Soccer staff members remarked that “women players are conditioned to accept and respond to abusive coaching behaviors as youth players.”

While the report details complaints made about several coaches, it focuses its narrative on three: Paul Riley, Rory Dames and Christy Holly. The accusations against Riley, who last coached the North Carolina Courage, and Dames, who coached the Chicago Red Stars, have been well documented in news media reports. The accusations against Holly, who was abruptly dismissed as coach of Racing Louisville F.C. last year with little explanation, have not been aired publicly before.

Holly spoke with investigators and denied some, but not all, of the claims made against him. Through his lawyer, Dames declined to speak with investigators. Riley agreed to provide written responses but never did.

Riley and Dames did not respond to requests for comment Monday. Holly declined to comment.

Holly sexually coerced a player, according to the report, by inviting her to his home for what he said was a session to watch game film. Instead, he showed the player pornography and masturbated in front of her. Another time, according to the report, after calling in the player again under the pretense of watching game film, Holly groped the player’s genitals and breasts each time the film showed she made a mistake.

While coaching in the women’s league years earlier, the report also found, Holly drew complaints of verbal abuse and mistreatment and had a relationship with a player “that caused a toxic team environment.” Yet little vetting of his past occurred as he moved from job to job.

The report found that Riley “leveraged his position” as a coach to coerce at least three players into sexual relationships while working previously in a different women’s soccer league, and it said that investigators received “credible reports of sexual misconduct with other players” that were not detailed in the final report.

Dames, a longtime youth soccer coach, fostered a “sexualized team environment” that included speaking to youth players about their sex lives, according to the report. That environment “crossed the line to sexual relationships” in multiple cases, which the report says “may have begun after the age of consent.” Dames also screamed at and belittled players, and joked about the age of consent for sexual activity.

In the cases of all three coaches, the report found, the women’s league and U.S. Soccer officials, as well as individual team owners and executives, were repeatedly made aware of complaints of inappropriate behavior but largely did nothing to address them or prevent them from occurring elsewhere.

Sexual misconduct allegations were brought against Riley each year from 2015 to 2021, for example, and an anonymous player survey in 2014 also identified Riley, then coaching the Portland Thorns, as verbally abusive and sexist. The survey results were seen by U.S. Soccer and league officials, and feedback was distributed to the Thorns owner Merritt Paulson.

In 2015, after the Thorns conducted an investigation, Riley was terminated. But the team said publicly that it had chosen not to extend his contract, and Riley was not disciplined. When he was hired by another team months later, no one from the league or the federation — which at the time effectively ran and bankrolled the league — provided his new team with any of the complaints or information used to substantiate his termination by the Thorns.

Players also complained about Dames for years, beginning in 2014, when they told Sunil Gulati, then the U.S. Soccer president, and Jill Ellis, then the women's national team head coach, that Dames had created a hostile work environment with the Chicago Red Stars, according to the report. Dames was also called abusive by his players in anonymous surveys, and in 2018 he was investigated after another prominent player complained. Yet while a U.S. Soccer investigation into that case substantiated many of the complaints, the report was not distributed throughout the organization or to the league or the Red Stars, and Dames was not disciplined.

In addition to detailing the behavior of several prominent coaches and the inaction of others, the report also took note of individuals and organizations who were not forthcoming or who actively tried to stymie the investigation — even as some publicly said they were cooperating.

Jeff Plush, who was the commissioner of the women's league from 2015 and 2017 and is now the head of U.S.A. Curling, did not respond to the investigators, the report said. Dan Flynn, the retired U.S. Soccer chief executive, responded only to written questions and would not sit for an interview.

The Thorns, meanwhile, “interfered with our access to relevant witnesses and raised specious legal arguments” to impede the investigation, according to the report. Racing Louisville F.C. declined to provide documents about Holly's tenure, and told investigators that current and former employees could not speak about him because of nondisclosure and non-disparagement agreements the team had signed with Holly when he was fired.

The Chicago Red Stars also delayed production of documents for months.

Rectifying the problems identified in the report will be difficult. Soccer in the United States is run by a number of organizations — federations, professional leagues, youth clubs and state soccer organizations — that have overlapping authority, a tangled web that the report suggested may have played a role in reports of abusive behavior going unheeded.

And the revelations may not be over. A separate joint investigation by the women's league and its players association has not been completed, and the report also did not investigate youth soccer, even as it made clear that the investigators believe abuse is prevalent there as well.

“The roots of abuse in women's soccer run deep and will not be eliminated through reform in the N.W.S.L. alone,” investigators wrote.

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Click on link

[Read the Report on Abuse in Women's Soccer](#)

HEADLINE	10/04 NKorea arsenal has grown rapidly
SOURCE	https://www.nytimes.com/article/north-korea-arsenal-nukes.html
GIST	<p>SEOUL — North Korea has test-fired a flurry of missiles in recent weeks, culminating Tuesday with the launch of an intermediate-range ballistic missile over Japan into the Pacific Ocean. The test missile, which traveled farther than any previous rocket launched by the country, was the latest demonstration of the North's growing and increasingly sophisticated military arsenal.</p> <p>The escalation comes as its leader, Kim Jong-un, has sought to solidify the country's stance as a nuclear-armed power and his position at its helm. Last month, North Korea adopted a new law saying it would launch a nuclear strike “automatically and immediately” if the command and control system for its nuclear forces — an apparent reference to Mr. Kim's leadership — was put in danger.</p> <p>As the risk of nuclear war grows once again with Russia's invasion of Ukraine, Mr. Kim earlier this year pledged to expand the North's nuclear arsenal “at the fastest possible speed.” He said that it was not merely a deterrent but could be used “if any forces try to violate the fundamental interests of our state.”</p>

North Korea has carried out 23 weapons tests so far this year, involving a total of 43 ballistic and cruise missiles. It conducted four tests just last week, in apparent protest of joint military exercises between the U.S., South Korea and Japan.

President Biden has warned of “[responses](#)” if [North Korea](#) continues to escalate tensions on the Korean Peninsula, but his calls for additional United Nations sanctions earlier this year were blocked by Russia and China. The international community and the United States have repeatedly tried both sanctions and dialogue to persuade North Korea to give up its nuclear weapons programs. Neither has worked.

Mr. Kim, the North Korean leader, [said last month](#) there would “no longer be any bargaining over our nuclear power.”

While it’s difficult to get a clear, up-to-date picture of North Korea’s military capabilities, analysts and observers agree that in the decade under Mr. Kim’s rule, [North Korea](#) has rapidly expanded its nuclear program and modernized its missile fleet. The expansion of the arsenal is a growing threat to the United States and its allies in the region. Here’s what’s in it.

There are an increasing number of nuclear warheads.

North Korea’s ballistic missiles can carry nuclear warheads, and the country conducted six increasingly sophisticated underground nuclear tests between 2006 and 2017. The last four of them happened under Mr. Kim.

This year, Washington and Seoul have repeatedly warned that North Korea is gearing up for another nuclear test at Punggye-ri, where the North conducted all of its previous underground nuclear tests.

Its [last and most powerful nuclear test](#) was conducted in September 2017, when North Korea claimed to have detonated a thermonuclear, or hydrogen, bomb. Estimates of the device’s explosive power ranged from 50 to 300 kilotons.

A mere 100 kilotons would make the test six times as powerful as the bomb dropped on Hiroshima in 1945.

North Korea has extracted plutonium, an atomic bomb fuel, from its Soviet-designed [nuclear reactor in Yongbyon](#), north of Pyongyang. It also runs centrifuges to [produce weapons-grade enriched uranium](#), another bomb fuel.

As of 2021, North Korea had enough fissile material for 40 to 50 nuclear warheads and could produce enough for six or seven bombs a year, according to an estimate by the [Arms Control Association](#). The United Nations’ nuclear watchdog last year said that North Korea may be preparing to ramp up its production of plutonium and [highly enriched uranium](#) in Yongbyon.

Its missiles can fly longer ranges.

North Korea [demonstrated the biggest strides](#) in its weapons capabilities in 2017.

That year, the country fired its intermediate-range ballistic missile, [Hwasong-12](#), over Japan and threatened an “[enveloping](#)” strike around the American territory of Guam. It also test-fired [Hwasong-14](#) and [Hwasong-15](#), the country’s first intercontinental ballistic missiles.

By the end of the year, Mr. Kim claimed that his country had the ability to launch a nuclear strike against the continental United States.

After 2017, Mr. Kim stopped testing nuclear weapons and long-range missiles but [threatened](#) to end his [moratorium](#) when talks with President Trump [collapsed](#) in 2019.

During a nighttime military parade in the fall of 2020, North Korea displayed [a new, untested I.C.B.M.](#) that looked bigger than any of the previous ones.

In March, North Korea [appeared to conduct](#) its most powerful I.C.B.M. test to date. While state media called it the larger Hwasong-17, showcasing the missile in a Hollywood-style propaganda video, South Korea [later said](#) it appeared to be the older Hwasong-15. The South said that clips and photos of the launch were faked to exaggerate Mr. Kim's weapons achievements for a domestic audience.

The biggest unanswered question is whether North Korea has mastered the technology needed to send an intercontinental nuclear warhead into space and then guide it back through the earth's atmosphere to its target. North Korea has yet to demonstrate that its warhead can survive the intense heat and friction created by re-entry.

Its weapons are getting more sophisticated.

When North Korea [resumed missile tests](#) in 2019 following the collapse of the Kim-Trump talks, the tests featured three new weapons, code-named [KN-23](#), [KN-24](#) and [KN-25](#) by outside experts.

They each marked big advances in North Korea's short-range ballistic missile program.

Unlike its older missiles that used liquid fuel, all three of the new missiles used solid fuel. The new solid-fuel weapons, mounted on mobile launchers, are easier to transport and hide and take less time to prepare. And at least two of them, KN-23 and KN-24, could perform low-altitude maneuvers, making them harder to intercept.

At a [military parade in 2021](#), North Korea displayed what looked like a bigger, upgraded version of KN-23. Photos released by the North Korean media indicate that it was the [newly developed tactical guided missile](#) North Korea launched in March of that year.

The new missile was developed to be larger than KN-23 in order to carry a bigger warhead and more fuel. North Korea claimed that the missile could carry a 2.5-ton warhead. South Korea's defense minister later admitted that his military missed part of the North Korean missile's trajectory because of its midair maneuvering.

North Korea also test-launched ["long-range cruise missiles"](#) in September 2021. It called them a "strategic weapon," indicating that it would arm the new missile with nuclear warheads. Also in 2021, North Korea began testing what it called a ballistic missile with a detachable "hypersonic" gliding warhead.

The country's missile tests have demonstrated that they were becoming harder to intercept.

It has also been testing [submarine-launched ballistic missiles](#) since 2015.

During military parades in 2020 and 2021, North Korea [displayed](#) what looked like two upgraded versions of its Pukguksong submarine-launched ballistic missiles. It currently has only one submarine that can launch a ballistic missile but says it is building [a new one](#) with greater capabilities.

The arsenal is no bargaining chip, Kim Jong-un says.

North Korea has one of the largest standing armies in the world, with more than one million soldiers. But much of its equipment is old and obsolete, and the military lacks fuel and spare parts.

It has sought to make up for its shortcomings by building nuclear weapons, which it says are primarily a deterrent.

In a speech before the Supreme People's Assembly in September, Mr. Kim said the North would not give up its nuclear weapons as long as nuclear weapons and "imperialism" exist on the Earth. He said: "We have drawn the line of no retreat regarding our nuclear weapons so that there will be no longer any bargaining over them."

	<p>“Pyongyang has been in a dizzying sprint to build an arsenal that contains the kinds of advanced capabilities you would find in the United States or Russia,” said Adam Mount, senior fellow at the Federation of American Scientists. “But for the most part, these have been single-serving demonstrations: Pyongyang tests the system once then moves onto the next one. It’s less clear whether they will complete testing or deployment of any or all of these systems.”</p>
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HEADLINE	10/03 CDC ends Covid country travel advisories
SOURCE	https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/03/us/politics/cdc-covid-travel-advisories.html
GIST	<p>WASHINGTON — The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention will no longer maintain a list of Covid-19 travel advisories for foreign countries, the agency said on Monday, another sign of the gradual shift toward prepandemic normalcy even as about 1,400 people around the world are dying each day from the virus.</p> <p>The agency said it would instead issue travel health notices only for “a concerning Covid-19 variant” or other situation that would change travel recommendations for a particular country, as it does with other diseases like monkeypox, polio and yellow fever.</p> <p>The announcement came as data reporting about the pandemic has been scaled back around the world. The C.D.C. said it was ending the list of advisories because “fewer countries are testing or reporting Covid-19 cases,” limiting the agency’s ability to assess the risk level for travelers accurately.</p> <p>In April, the C.D.C. dropped a “do not travel” warning that it had in place for about 90 countries and other destinations because of the Covid risk there, saying it would reserve that label for “special circumstances.”</p> <p>The same month, a federal judge struck down the C.D.C.’s mask mandate for travel on planes, trains and buses. In June, the agency ended its requirement for travelers flying to the United States to provide a negative coronavirus test result before boarding.</p> <p>In August, the C.D.C. loosened its domestic Covid guidelines, noting that while the virus was “here to stay,” the United States now had the tools to reduce severe illness and death. And in an interview last month, President Biden declared that “the pandemic is over.”</p>
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HEADLINE	10/04 Scouting for firewood or for Russia?
SOURCE	https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/04/world/europe/ukraine-russia-prisoner-lyman.html
GIST	<p>The white speedboat pulled close to the riverbank in eastern Ukraine and disgorged a half-dozen Ukrainian soldiers carrying their rifles, their packs and the look of exhaustion that comes from days on the front under relentless shelling.</p> <p>But the last two men aboard the pleasure craft-turned-troop transport awkwardly hoisted a different kind of cargo ashore: a prisoner clad in a Russian camouflage parka with a dish towel fixed around his head using clear packing tape, applied by his captors so that he could not identify the location.</p> <p>His name was Aleksandr, he was 69 years old and he insisted that he had done nothing wrong. The Ukrainians weren’t buying it.</p> <p>Ukrainian and Russian forces have captured thousands of prisoners since Russia invaded in February. Seesaw battles, offensives and retreats often yield dozens of captives who are ferried off to headquarters for interrogation. And with both militaries often in uniform, identifying combatants is far easier than it was during the murky counterinsurgency conflicts of the last two decades in places like Iraq or Afghanistan.</p> <p>But when Aleksandr was captured outside the eastern city of Lyman last week, he was thinly dressed, without the customary armband denoting his allegiance — usually red or white for Russia and blue or</p>

yellow for Ukraine. To keep him warm, the Ukrainian soldiers gave him a Russian parka they had lying around in their trench.

“He came out of the forest and went to our positions,” said Serhiy, one of the Ukrainian soldiers who had found Aleksandr, recounting the capture to a pair of reporters from The New York Times visiting their position near the front line.

Very little on the battlefield can be ascertained with much conviction: where the enemy will strike next, what lies around the bend of a river, whether the next step in an overgrown field will land safely or detonate a deadly mine. The exchange between Ukrainian soldiers and Aleksandr that unfolded over the next roughly 15 minutes provided a snapshot of the confusion and ambiguity that defines life on the front line — what has long been known as the fog of war.

Lyman, a strategically important rail hub, sits on the northeastern bank of the Siverskyi Donets river amid a mesh of fields and forests. The Russians captured it in May, but over the weekend Ukraine’s forces retook the city as part of a stunning offensive that is pushing back Russia in the east. Lyman could serve as an important foothold in future Ukrainian advances.

Retaking Russian strongholds means also taking Russian prisoners. Mostly they are soldiers to be held by the Ukrainians, and possibly traded for their own comrades. But there are also civilians suspected of collaborating with the Russians — as the Ukrainian soldiers thought when they apprehended Aleksandr last week.

The Ukrainians were convinced he was a scout for the Russian troops nearby and was trying to find their positions and report them back to the enemy. “He’s the recon, he was looking around!” Serhiy exclaimed.

“What ‘look around’? I was going for firewood,” Aleksandr protested, standing next to Serhiy, blindfolded and expressing annoyance at the accusations. The only part of his face visible under the colored stripes of the towel was a weathered chin and gray beard stubble.

“How do I know whose positions are where?” Aleksandr asked meekly.

A soldier standing nearby scolded their prisoner: “Who are you telling tales here?” And he scoffed at Aleksandr’s excuse for being in the area. “Firewood!” he snorted.

Fighting in forests, as the Ukrainian troops were when they captured Aleksandr last Monday, is gut-wrenching. Lines of sight are obstructed by foliage, sounds are amplified and overanalyzed. Low-lying vegetation provides ample concealment for ambushes — so discovery, especially by the better-armed Russians, would make artillery quick to follow.

“He came out from 12 o’clock,” Serhiy added, meaning directly in front of his position. “From where no one is supposed to be at all, and no peaceful people.” In keeping with Ukrainian military precautions, Serhiy provided only his first name.

“Why were you helping them?” another soldier asked.

“Wh ... who did I help, I don’t get it?” Aleksandr said.

Artillery fire thudded in the distance and returning soldiers secured their speedboat to the muddy bank.

Aleksandr’s hands were unbound, but he held them behind his back. Serhiy adjusted his weight, holding his rifle nonchalantly, reminding his captive from time to time to keep his arms where he could see them.

The atmosphere between the troops and their captive was mostly nonthreatening, but over the course of the war Ukrainian and Russian forces have been accused of torturing and killing prisoners — though accusations against Moscow’s forces have far outweighed those against Ukraine’s.

Some soldiers suggested that Serhiy bind Aleksandr's hands. One man asked if anyone had any rope. "No need — where would he run?" Serhiy responded. Aleksandr's options for fleeing were few: run in his black, cartoonishly large rain boots up the muddy road into a Ukrainian military position, or wade into the algae-spotted water.

The Siversky Donets, a meandering dark green body of water, once checked the box for either a perfect picnic spot or a lazy cruise. But with crossing points such as bridges under fire, Ukrainian forces turned it into a highway of men and material as they battled for Lyman.

Rubber dinghies, rowboats and speedboats — acquired one way or another — zip up and down the river ferrying troops, casualties and evacuees. Lumbering Soviet-era amphibious transports have also made an appearance. Outposts connected with ropes that span opposing banks move supplies and people back and forth. Sentries lounge under tarps and store-bought camping tents.

But Aleksandr, practically blind to all of this with dishrag ski mask around his head, could only hear the commotion of the waterway. He had no idea where he was or where he was going. He was simply standing with Serhiy's hand gently wrapped around the back of his neck.

Aleksandr said he had served in the Soviet army in 1971, and had not served in the separatist military of the Donetsk People's Republic, which has been fighting Ukrainian government forces in a simmering war since 2014. Donetsk is one of four regions in Ukraine that President Vladimir V. Putin said he was annexing on Friday, a claim that was widely denounced as illegitimate in the West.

Some Ukrainian soldiers close by chuckled at Aleksandr's denials, though others bristled, convinced that he was working for the enemy. The separatist militias heavily rely on conscripts, many of them older men. But a man nearing 70 would be a stretch for even the most desperate recruiter.

"I am living in Zeleniy now," explained Aleksandr. "In Lyman, well ... I have a dacha, a garden there. I am cultivating a garden there."

"Potatoes. He was digging potatoes. Bulbas! Bulbas!" Serhiy joked, using the Ukrainian word for the vegetable.

The veracity of Aleksandr's explanations could not be confirmed. In his pocket were Russian rubles (which he said were used at the local market) and a one-time pass for him to transit from Lyman to the separatist-controlled city of Ilovaisk.

His pass had expired in the first week of September, but it read: ALLOWED EXIT FROM THE LIBERATED TERRITORY OF DONETSK PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC. The liberated territory referred to the towns and villages seized by Russia since the beginning of the war.

But now it meant little. He was on land controlled by Ukraine, and soon to be interrogated by its intelligence service.

When asked if he was scared, Aleksandr shrugged.

"Of course I'm scared."

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HEADLINE	10/03 How to measure impact of #MeToo?
SOURCE	https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2022/10/03/us/me-too-five-years.html
GIST	Last spring, the fate of an entire global movement was decided in a single Virginia courtroom. Or so the story went.

The actors and ex-spouses Amber Heard and Johnny Depp were dueling over defamation charges. An online mob swarmed Ms. Heard. Many observers feared that other women would be intimidated from airing abuse allegations. Even before a jury decided the case mostly in Mr. Depp's favor, obituaries for #MeToo began to appear, including in [this](#) newspaper.

"This is basically the end of MeToo," a psychologist [told](#) Rolling Stone after the verdict. "It's the death of the whole movement."

The #MeToo mourners came to that conclusion even though the actors' trial layered [allegations](#) of sexual and domestic violence with other elements — thermonuclear divorce, celebrity spectacle. Few commenters cited another story from that week: a bombshell [report](#) from the Southern Baptist Convention admitting that high-ranking church leaders had [suppressed and mishandled](#) allegations of abuse of women and children within its ranks over two decades. The group soon revealed a file more than 200 pages long, describing hundreds of accused ministers and other church workers. The reckoning, across the nation's largest Protestant denomination, was a broader, deeper #MeToo event than the celebrity courtroom battle, and a sign of the movement's durability.

Five years after the #MeToo movement exploded into a global phenomenon, its success is inherently hard to measure.

The conventional way to score it follows whatever [prominent accused man](#) is falling or prevailing at the time. Harvey Weinstein is sent to prison; Bill Cosby walks free. Andrew M. Cuomo resigns; R. Kelly is convicted.

"It's up and down and up and down all the time," said Tarana Burke, who founded the #MeToo movement in 2006, to seek healing for Black women who suffered sexual abuse.

After The New York Times and The New Yorker [revealed the allegations against Mr. Weinstein](#) in October 2017, the phrase #MeToo didn't just go viral — it also expanded. Ms. Burke watched as the term she had coined was used in ways that went far beyond her organization and mission. People used it to describe not only rape and workplace sexual harassment, but also domestic violence, gender bias and verbal abuse.

However, the malleability that has given #MeToo power and influence also makes it a challenge even for supporters to define clear objectives or tabulate gains and losses.

Take two episodes from this year. In April, Louis C.K. won a Grammy, provoking [cringes](#) from many fellow comedians, fans and others, especially as his accusers — female comedians with nowhere near his clout — continued to [struggle](#). But his is also arguably one of the most settled #MeToo stories, because he admitted that the allegations against him were true. The lingering controversy is less about the facts than about whether he has been adequately punished.

After claims of sexual misconduct against the N.F.L. quarterback [Deshaun Watson](#) mounted in 2021, the Cleveland Browns signed him to a \$230 million fully guaranteed contract, prompting [complaints](#) that the league wasn't taking the allegations seriously and didn't care about women. But this past summer, after a league investigation found that Mr. Watson had committed multiple violations of its personal conduct policy, the quarterback was [suspended](#) for 11 games and fined a record \$5 million. While some saw the penalties as a slap on the wrist, they were among the most severe in league history.

These stories are shape shifters, evidence of #MeToo's endurance or its waning influence.

But pulling back from individual transgressions, and examining #MeToo at the systemic level, shows that the past five years have been very consequential.

In 2016, Fatima Goss Graves, head of the National Women's Law Center, was among a group of sexual harassment experts crafting policy recommendations for the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

At the time, she said, the issue seemed stuck. The group didn't see the political will to accomplish change.

The #MeToo explosion the next year brought new commitment. Since then, 22 states have passed laws to make workplaces safer. Some extend the statute of limitations for sexual harassment claims; others prohibit the use of nondisclosure agreements for financial settlements with victims, which are often used to hide abusers.

Companies have introduced tougher sexual harassment policies and new trainings. Many employers were motivated to act because "there's a financial interest," said Chai Feldblum, a former E.E.O.C. commissioner. "It's a real liability for businesses." Many corporate boards of directors have sprung into action, and at some businesses the definition of a firing offense has grown.

"The energy of so many people speaking out really accelerated the change in policy," Ms. Goss Graves said. "Institutions were forced to respond."

Still, a consensus on specific goals has been slow to emerge. The pain that has been unleashed is so great that "a lot of focus has been on healing," said Shaunna Thomas, founder of UltraViolet, a women's rights advocacy group.

"We are working on a shift away from individual 'bad actor' accountability" to more systemic reform, she added.

Asked what the measures of progress should be, she and other leaders and experts proposed a variety of goals. More than one person mentioned strengthening federal [sexual harassment laws](#), which don't cover all workers.

Ms. Thomas also cited curbing online abuse and strengthening the social safety net so that low-wage workers are less vulnerable to abusive employers. Ms. Burke said the focus should be on "consent education in school," so that children will learn "to reject rape culture and respect bodily autonomy." Ms. Feldblum, the former E.E.O.C. official, recommended self-assessments in which corporations check on whether their employees feel able to report problems.

In the coming year, public attention is likely to swing back to Mr. Weinstein. Already serving a prison sentence in New York, he will face trial this fall in Los Angeles. He was also recently [charged](#) with two counts of indecent assault in London. And New York's highest court agreed to hear [his appeal](#) of the original sentence, so there's a chance he could walk free.

None of the cases will be a judgment on the broad range of allegations against Mr. Weinstein, who has been accused by more than 90 women of sexual misconduct, including rape. The court cases involve relatively few women, whose claims must meet the strict standards that criminal law requires for conviction.

Ms. Goss Graves, the National Women's Law Center director, said the reason that objectives are hard to define is that the central one is so ambitious.

"Our goal has to be ending sexual violence," she said. "The real goal feels giant, and not achievable overnight."

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HEADLINE	10/03 DOJ: China's transnational repression
SOURCE	https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2022/oct/3/report-details-chinas-covert-overseas-police-opera/
GIST	China has developed a network of overseas "police stations" to conduct covert operations aimed at forcing Chinese nationals, mostly political dissidents wanted by Beijing, to return to China, according to a report by a human rights group.

The Chinese Ministry of Public Security police operations netted 230,000 Chinese nationals from April 2021 through July who were “persuaded” to return to China as part of criminal investigations into fraud and computer crime, according to an investigation released by Safeguard Defenders.

The report noted that police operations code-named Fox Hunt included forced repatriations of 10,000 “high-value” people from 120 countries by the end of 2021.

“Our deep-dive into individual cases also demonstrated how only about 50% of those reported were successful, and how most involved dissidents or individuals that had fled religious and/or ethnic persecution,” the report said.

The 21-page report, “110 Overseas: Chinese Transnational Policing Gone Wild,” is based on data provided by the Chinese government. The report was published last month by the Spain-based human rights organization. It provides new details on secret Chinese police operations that the Justice Department has labeled “transnational repression.”

One veteran China watcher called the findings a cause for deep concern and a sign of China’s attitude toward the rights of other nations.

“The presence of PRC police in nations across Europe and the rest of the world is increasingly alarming,” said retired Navy Capt. Jim Fanell, a former Pacific Fleet intelligence chief. “The notion that nation-states cannot police their populations without the assistance of the People’s Armed Police is not only an attack on the sovereignty of these nations but is a reminder that the Chinese Communist Party continues on their path of global domination.”

Charles Burton, a former Canadian diplomat posted in Beijing, denounced the Chinese police activities in Canada as clear violations of national sovereignty.

“This is an outrage,” Mr. Burton, now with the Macdonald-Laurier Institute in Ottawa, Ontario, wrote in a recent op-ed article for The Globe and Mail newspaper. “Chinese police setting up offices in Canada, then ‘persuading’ alleged criminals to return to the motherland to face ‘justice’ — while our own government and security services apparently choose to look the other way — represents a gross violation of Canada’s national sovereignty, international law and the norms of diplomacy.”

The Justice Department is prosecuting several cases of Chinese officials charged with illegal harassment of dissidents in the United States.

“These operations eschew official bilateral police and judicial cooperation and violate the international rule of law, and may violate the territorial integrity in third countries involved in setting up a parallel policing mechanism using illegal methods,” the report states.

‘110 Overseas’

The Chinese call their overseas police operations “110 Overseas” after the national emergency telephone number. At least 54 of the police “overseas service stations” were identified in 30 nations on five continents. Most are in Europe.

The report identifies one Chinese service station in New York and three in Canada that the report says are used to support Chinese activities targeting overseas Chinese under the euphemism “persuasion to return.”

A spokesman for the New York Police Department referred questions about the Chinese police station to the Justice Department and FBI. The Justice Department did not immediately respond to a request for a statement, and the FBI declined to comment.

A Chinese Embassy spokesman also did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

According to the rights groups, the overseas police operations are used to target dissidents, corrupt officials and low-level criminals, and pressure the targets directly or by threatening family members still in China. The police operations are part of Chinese President Xi Jinping's anti-corruption campaign, which has also served as a massive political purge of Mr. Xi's rivals since he took power in 2013.

The report states that the covert police operations also leverage the Chinese Communist Party's United Front Work Department front groups. The department is an influence and intelligence agency that has set up Chinese "Overseas Home Associations" on five continents that are linked to the secret police work, the report said.

The covert operations use three methods of "involuntary returns" to force targets to return to China: by tracking down family members in China and using intimidation, harassment, detention or imprisonment to pressure the family member to return "voluntarily," by directly targeting a person online or through undercover agents or proxies who threaten and harass the target into returning voluntarily, and through kidnappings of targets on foreign soil.

The FBI has identified secret Chinese assassination teams based in Hong Kong that can be deployed rapidly to kill Chinese nationals targeted overseas. The teams were disclosed in court papers in a Chinese spy case in Los Angeles several years ago.

The Justice Department has prosecuted several indictments of Chinese state-sponsored repression of U.S.-based dissidents.

A U.S. citizen and four Chinese nationals from the Ministry of State Security (MSS), the intelligence service, were charged in May with conspiracy and other charges related to an espionage and transnational repression operation involving pro-democracy human rights activists.

"We will not tolerate efforts by the PRC or any authoritarian government to export repressive measures to our country," said Matthew G. Olsen, assistant attorney general and chief of the national security division.

Two months earlier, the Justice Department unsealed an indictment of another MSS official charged with hiring a private investigator to harass and physically assault a Chinese pro-democracy activist.

China's rulers are using police operations to remind the millions who left China that they are still subject to the dictates of the ruling Communist Party.

"This provides Beijing with an army of conscripts in foreign nations who will execute Beijing's bidding," Capt. Fanell said. "Free and open nations should reject this overt interference."

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HEADLINE	10/03 Student debt bailout benefits top earners
SOURCE	https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2022/oct/3/joe-bidens-student-debt-bailout-benefits-top-earne/
GIST	<p>President Biden's \$420 billion student debt bailout will benefit top earners the most, according to a new study released Monday.</p> <p>The non-partisan Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget estimated that those in the top half of the earning spectrum stand to reap 57% to 65% of the benefit from Mr. Biden's cancellation of up to \$20,000 in student debt for borrowers who earn less than \$125,000 per year.</p> <p>President Biden has touted the plan as a way to level the playing field for those saddled with insurmountable debt and ease the racial wage gap by offering extra relief for Pell Grant borrowers, who are more than twice as likely to be Black.</p>

But the CRFB analysis notes that while the Biden administration attempted to blunt the regressive effect of canceling student debt by setting income caps and extending added relief for those from lower-income families, the plan does not fully reverse it.

According to the CRFB analysis, the application for debt cancellation through the program is likely to be a more significant barrier for low-income borrowers, especially those whose loans are in forbearance and are “detached from the system,” thereby dropping the participation rate in the program among those earning less.

“The lower the take-up rate, the more regressive the policy becomes,” the CRFB concluded.

The report also points out that the administration’s use of income from 2020 to 2021 to determine eligibility could “blunt the effectiveness of the means testing” meant to cancel out its regressive effects.

“Many high-income households had low reported income in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic as a result of temporary job loss, decisions to exit the workforce temporarily for child care, reductions in business income,” the authors note in the report.

The authors also point out that “in any year, there is also a group of high-earning professionals (lawyers, doctors, and MBAs) who were in graduate school or temporary lower-income jobs such as medical residency two years earlier.”

Mr. Biden unveiled his long-awaited plan last month, which includes canceling \$10,000 in student debt for borrowers who earn less than \$125,000 per year and \$20,000 in debt for those who received Pell Grants.

Mr. Biden’s plan calls for lowering monthly payments on outstanding undergraduate loans from 10% to 5% of discretionary income and forgives loan balances after 10 years of payments, instead of 20 years for original loan balances of \$12,000 or less.

He also announced one “final” pause on federal student loan repayments brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic through December.

The administration scaled back certain eligibility requirements last week, making federally guaranteed student loans held by private lenders ineligible for cancellation. The Department of Education said last Thursday that the change would affect 770,000 borrowers.

Mr. Biden has faced backlash from both sides of the aisle since announcing the forgiveness, and the plan has been met with legal challenges on multiple fronts.

Six Republican-led states – Nebraska, Arkansas, Iowa, Kansas and South Carolina — sued last week to stop the rollout of the forgiveness plan, arguing that the president does not have the legal authority to write off the billions in debt.

An Indiana-based public interest attorney argued in a separate suit filed last week that the move is an illegal overreach by the administration that would increase state tax burdens for some who have their debt forgiven automatically.

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HEADLINE	10/03 Russia no control of any annexed provinces
SOURCE	https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/oct/03/russia-has-no-full-control-of-any-of-four-annexed-ukrainian-provinces
GIST	Russia no longer has full control of any of the four provinces of Ukraine it says it annexed last week after Ukrainian troops advanced dozens of kilometres in Kherson province in the south of the country and made additional gains in the east.

On Monday, the Russian military acknowledged that Kyiv's forces had broken through in the Kherson region. It said the Ukrainian army and its "superior tank units" had managed to "penetrate the depths of our defence" around the villages of Zoltaya Balka and Aleksandrovka.

The ministry of defence spokesperson Igor Konashenkov said Russian troops had occupied what he called a "pre-prepared defensive line". They continued to "inflict massive fire damage" on Ukrainian forces, he claimed.

His comments are an admission that Ukraine's southern counter-offensive is dramatically gaining pace, two months after it began. Ukrainian brigades appear to have achieved their biggest breakthrough in the region since the war started, bursting through the frontline and advancing rapidly along the Dnieper River.

The Ukrainian military's southern command said forces in the south destroyed 31 Russian tanks and one multiple rocket launcher, without providing details of where the fighting occurred.

Russian sources acknowledged that the Ukrainian tank offensive had moved along the river's west bank, recapturing a number of villages along the way, and threatening the supply lines for thousands of marooned Russian troops.

Speaking overnight, Zelenskiy said Ukraine's 129th brigade from his home city of Kryvyi Rih had liberated the settlements of Arkhanhelske and Myrolyubivka in the northern Kherson region. The brigade's soldiers flew a blue and yellow flag in Myrolyubivka from a shell-damaged roof.

Russian military bloggers suggested Ukraine's advance was spectacular. They claimed Kyiv's troops were close to Dudchany, about 20 miles (30km) south of where the front stood before the breakthrough, indicating one of the fastest advances of the war.

Anton Gerashchenko, an adviser to Ukraine's interior ministry, posted a photo of Ukrainian soldiers posing with their flag draping a golden statue of an angel. He said it was the village of Mikhailivka, about 20km beyond their previous position. The next apparent Ukrainian target was the city of Beryslav, on the banks of the Dnieper.

In a sign of turbulence inside Russia's army command, the head of the western military district was reportedly sacked on Monday in the wake of the recent defeats. The news outlet RBC said Col-Gen Alexander Zhuravlyov had been fired. His district is one of five that make up Russia's armed forces. The move follows criticism over the weekend by Chechnya's president, Ramzan Kadyrov, of Valery Gerasimov, Putin's chief of the general staff, over the loss of Lyman.

"This is obviously related to the war blunders, which are becoming harder to hide. The Kremlin is looking for scapegoats," said a former Russian defence ministry official who has worked with Zhuravlyov. "The pressure on the commander of the Russian armed forces, Valery Gerasimov, will only increase," the former defence ministry official added.

In his latest address, Zelenskiy dismissed as a "farce" Russia's annexation of Ukrainian territory, which includes Kherson, Zaporizhzhia, Donetsk and Luhansk provinces. Declining to mention Vladimir Putin by name, he said "someone somewhere" had recently held what he called "pseudo-referendums".

"When the Ukrainian flag is returned, no one remembers the Russian farce with some pieces of paper," Zelenskiy said. "Except, of course, the law enforcement agencies of Ukraine. Because everyone who is involved in any elements of aggression against our state will be accountable for it."

On Friday, Putin held a grand signing ceremony in the Kremlin with the four Russian-picked "leaders" of the occupied Ukrainian regions. He declared the territories were Russia's "for ever" and said he would use "all available means" to defend them – an apparent reference to nuclear weapons. The Russian State Duma – the lower house of parliament – rubber-stamped the move on Monday.

But the Kremlin's strategy quickly unravelled in the face of embarrassing defeats on the battlefield and confusion as to where Russia's new international "borders" actually were. Over the weekend Ukrainian troops recaptured the city of Lyman in Donetsk oblast – in theory a part of Russia.

On Monday, Putin's spokesperson, Dmitry Peskov, failed to clarify the issue when he said: "We will continue to consult with the people who live in these areas." This appeared to be a face-saving formula in the event – as seems likely – of further Russian military setbacks in the coming days and weeks.

In the eastern Donbas, local separatist leaders acknowledged that Ukraine's army had crossed the administrative borders of Luhansk province, advancing from Lyman. Russia controls only about a half of Donetsk oblast. It is going backwards, seven months into Putin's full-scale invasion.

In the eastern city of Sloviansk, there was evidence of the recent battles and continuing offensive as captured Russian armour was towed into the city. The fall of Lyman has opened the way for Ukrainian forces to advance deep into Luhansk province, threatening the main supply routes to territory Moscow captured in some of the war's bloodiest battles in June and July.

Observers in Kyiv were cautious on Monday about the scale of Ukrainian gains in the south. They said continuous battles were going on across a flat steppe landscape. Russian troops were using tanks, mortars, and jets to fire at Ukrainian positions and were making extensive use of drones. They were trying to repair bridges across the Dnieper destroyed by Ukrainian missile strikes.

The deputy head of Russia's puppet administration in the Kherson region, Kirill Stremousov, acknowledged the Ukrainian army was advancing. But he added that "everything is under control". He recorded a video standing next to a reed-lined riverbank, with Kherson's Antonivskyi Bridge visible behind him.

Stremousov said: "We are on the ground and continue to take care of the citizens of the Russian Federation of the Kherson region. We are now Russia and everything will be fine."

Speaking on Russian TV, his boss, Vladimir Saldo, admitted things were not entirely going to plan. "It's tense, let's put it that way," he said. Saldo took part in Friday's ceremony in the Kremlin, shaking hands with Putin. On Monday, the Duma rubber-stamped the "annexation treaty".

Zelenskiy's senior advisers have humorously pointed out the absurdity and surrealism of Russia "annexing" territory, while at the same time losing control of it. Oleksiy Arestovych tweeted on Monday that "more and more settlements" were "rapidly withdrawing from the Russian Federation". He added: "Now in the Kherson direction."

Russia occupies only about 30% of the Zaporizhzhia region. This includes the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant but not Zaporizhzhia city, the main urban centre. Social media channels suggested Russian troops have recently stopped civilians from leaving via a crossing point to Ukrainian government-run territory, with hundreds of cars stuck.

In the north-east of the country, Ukraine was close to liberating all of the Kharkiv region after a counter-offensive which began last month. The Russian frontline is in the east of the oblast not far from the town of Kupiansk and was said to be collapsing. Ukrainian troops liberated several villages including Shykyivka.

They were reportedly moving east and along the right-bank of the Oskil River towards the border with Luhansk oblast and the city of Svatove. One unverified report said Russian soldiers had abandoned their positions in a large forest area without a fight, and were fleeing.

The International Atomic Energy Agency said Russia had freed the head of the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power station. Ihor Murashov disappeared on Friday while on his way to work at the plant, which Russian troops have occupied since March. A Russian patrol abducted him.

	<p>The Kremlin has been coercing Ukrainian employees to sign new contracts with Rosatom, its state nuclear agency. The IAEA says it had received confirmation Murashov “had returned to his family safely”.</p> <p>Russia still occupies about 15% of Ukraine, including Crimea. But since September the Ukrainians have reclaimed large chunks of land, via twin counter-offensives in the north-east and south. It remains to be seen if Russia’s mass mobilisation at home will change this equation.</p>
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HEADLINE	10/03 WA’s epidemic of inaccessible sidewalks
SOURCE	https://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/transportation/wa-faces-an-epidemic-of-inaccessible-sidewalks/
GIST	<p>The Tacoma apartment was listed as wheelchair accessible, but it didn’t matter, because Krystal Monteros couldn’t get there in the first place.</p> <p>When the bus dropped her at the closest stop, Monteros, a wheelchair user, found herself on a small concrete island with only gravel “sidewalks” to either side. The building she wanted to visit was to the south, but her path to get there ended with a 6-inch drop and no ramp. The four-lane road didn’t have any crossings.</p> <p>So Monteros got out her cellphone and canceled her appointment for a tour. Then she waited once more for the bus that had just dropped her off.</p> <p>“If I can’t access them through public transportation, I’m not going to live there,” she said. “I’m going to be trapped in my unit.”</p> <p>Between Monteros and a new apartment sat obstacles that, to many, likely wouldn’t register at all: a missing sidewalk and a curb without a ramp. Yet, for her and other wheelchair users, such barriers mean dramatic daily limits on where she can go and what she can do. Monteros, who was born with spina bifida, leaving her without the use of her legs below her knees, has to know her routes in advance. “If I don’t know the area, I’m not going to go there by myself,” she said.</p> <p>Across Washington lies a glut of impassable sidewalks for people with disabilities. At thousands of intersections, sidewalks end without a ramp to the street. Where there are ramps, a Seattle Times review of more than 30 cities’ and counties’ assessments of their roads and sidewalks found no jurisdiction where even 50% comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act — a microcosm of sidewalks’ sorry state. In most locations, close to three-quarters are out of compliance: too narrow, too steep, too rough, gaps in the concrete and more.</p> <p>In Auburn, 71% of curb ramps do not meet ADA standards; in Battle Ground, Clark County, 65%; Olympia, 71%; Marysville, 75%.</p> <p>The list goes on, a catalog of all the places people with disabilities struggle to go.</p> <p>Cities and counties are legally obligated under the landmark 1990 federal law to tackle the problem. But the job is so vast and the price so high that tentative plans for replacement look decades into the future. In unincorporated King County, where just 10% of curb ramps were found to be ADA compliant, the cost of upgrades is estimated to be \$500 million. Kirkland’s sidewalk repair plan runs until nearly 2060. In Olympia, which has either no or inadequate ramps on more than 4,000 sidewalks, the cost is put at more than \$100 million. The city’s 2023 budget for its sidewalk repair program is \$200,000.</p> <p>The collective cost across Washington is well into the billions.</p> <p>“It’s pretty overwhelming to look at it and say, holy moly,” said Desiree Winkler, Federal Way’s deputy of public works.</p>

Accountability is spotty, largely based on complaints or litigation. More money is becoming available at the state level for sidewalk projects thanks to a \$17 billion transportation funding measure passed by lawmakers this year. But little money is dedicated from the state or federal government specifically for accessibility.

As a result, cities are mostly on their own — here and around the country — to fix what can feel like an unfixable problem.

“We need \$106 million,” said Mark Russell, Olympia’s public works interim director. “I don’t see the state and community supporting that kind of investment that quickly.”

ADA attorney

By the time she left the U.S. Attorney’s Office in the Western District of Washington this year, Christina Fogg was the only attorney working on ADA issues, and only part time.

“I could make a full-time job just doing ADA enforcement,” said Fogg, who now works for Metropolitan King County Councilmember Rod Dembowski. “It was always a frustration to not have more resources. I got this feeling, certainly with respect to ADA, of ‘how many stones are we leaving unturned?’ “

Title II of the ADA mandates that no person with disabilities “be denied the benefits of the services, programs, or activities of a public entity, or be subjected to discrimination by any such entity.” An estimated 8% of Washington residents have some kind of mobility disability, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Any government with at least 50 employees must conduct an evaluation of its streets’ accessibility. But absent ADA police, enforcement is complaint-based and change comes mostly through litigation.

“Lawsuits are making a bigger impact — more than policy — in that they’re raising awareness and making local governments commit,” said Yochai Eisenberg, a professor of disability and human development at the University of Illinois at Chicago.

In 2015, three men with disabilities sued the city of Seattle in federal court over curb ramps they alleged were “too narrow, too steep, or too cracked, broken, or uplifted to be used by individuals with mobility disabilities.” A 2013 evaluation found 5,000 ramps to be out of compliance with the ADA, 1,750 severely so.

The city agreed to a settlement with Disability Rights Washington that mandated it build or fix 1,250 ramps per year over the next 18 years, at a cost of roughly \$300 million.

“Very few neighborhoods were ‘walkable’ as a wheelchair user, primarily because of that issue,” said Conrad Reynoldson, the attorney who represented the men and a wheelchair user himself.

Lawsuits like the one in Seattle have popped up in large cities in recent years, including in Philadelphia, Atlanta, Los Angeles, Portland, Chicago and others — one of the only avenues to force change.

At the same time, smaller communities often have similar or worse ADA compliance.

“It was really frustrating that that’s the only way these things come up, because how many people even know they can turn to the [Department of Justice]?” said Fogg.

Outside of the courts, few entities are looking over the shoulders of local governments to ensure they’re planning for and executing progress. Some locations that are required to survey their facilities, including Kitsap County, haven’t done so.

Anna Zivarts, director of the Disability Mobility Initiative Program at Disability Rights Washington, has been pushing local transportation agencies to take a more active role in overseeing the creation and

implementation of plans for improving sidewalk accessibility. So far, the issue has been hot-potatoed around, with no clear agreement on who can or should step in.

Even the Washington State Department of Transportation is unsure how local ADA compliance fits into its portfolio. The agency has compiled an informal list of which jurisdictions have written a transition plan, but no comprehensive analysis of compliance levels or progress has been done. Shawn Murinko, ADA coordinator for WSDOT, said they're starting conversations with the Federal Highway Administration "to fully understand our authority and everyone's roles and responsibilities," but declined to comment further.

"Nobody wants to take responsibility for it and there's no way to force them," said Zivarts.

On the streets

Kat Woofter, a wheelchair user, is in the street more than she's on the sidewalk. Most corners and intersections don't have ramps, leaving her stranded or in search of a driveway, which can have steep angles.

She and her partner live in Bremerton, one of few places in the state with a dedicated funding stream to make ADA improvements. His sight is limited, which means they both encounter the same barriers, but in different ways. She's well aware of the dangers of using the street, but it's either that or tethering herself to her home.

"It's dangerous and I'm scared, but I'm not going to let that stop me from my freedom," she said. "It feels so good to do things on my own."

It's the same for Monteros in Tacoma. She eventually found an apartment she could reach, near the back of a long complex. She rolls down the middle of the parking lot to run her errands. There's a sidewalk, but it's missing a ramp on the end, so she stays on the road. On rainy days, she doesn't go out at all; the exit is down a steep hill and she fears losing control into traffic.

"There's so many other things like this I can show you," she said.

Cataloging a city's ADA compliance is a painstaking process that often requires hired consultants to tally every sidewalk. In Everett, where 56% of existing ramps are not compliant and many other sidewalks have no ramp at all, staff walked 733 miles and surveyed over 3,000 locations, said Christina Curtis, Everett's transportation engineer.

University of Washington professor Jon Froehlich is working to hone a form of artificial intelligence that could accurately assess public infrastructure without physically counting each ramp or signal button.

"There's not enough research and follow-up and accountability," Froehlich said.

The requirements for ramps are highly specific: They can't be steeper than an 8.33% slope, must be flush at both the top and bottom, have at least 36 inches of sidewalk at the top and a lengthy list of other requirements.

Because the infrastructure of most cities predates the ADA, it's common, and expected, to find widespread noncompliance. Mark Herceg, public works director for the city of Battle Ground, said the consultants warned him: "It's going to be a big number and a large price tag."

Most ramps surveyed are considered significantly out of compliance. In Duvall, 88% were marked in need of "major" updates to reach compliance, versus 11% needing "minor" changes. In SeaTac, it was 80%.

New thinking

Only recently has Cecile Malik, senior transportation planner with the city of Auburn, noticed a change in thinking in the transportation world, toward "not just the cars, but other modes of transportation, and that includes accessibility," she said.

But turning that ship is slow. Private development, especially in fast-growing Puget Sound cities, is a major driver of accessibility improvements. As they repave sidewalks outside of their new buildings, they must do so in accordance with ADA.

Outside of development, cities can compete for federal Community Development Block Grant money or “active transportation” grants from the state, which got a jolt of new money this year from state legislators. Neither is specific to ADA, meaning they’re competing with a range of project proposals and often fold the accessibility upgrades into other project proposals.

The rest of the money must come straight out of local budgets, which can be a stretch for smaller cities. Marysville would have to spend its entire budget to cover the \$50 million in necessary upgrades, said Jeff Laycock, the city’s public works director.

The total costs statewide are murky, due in part to patchy implementation of transition plans and minimal central accounting. The state admitted in a 2020 transportation “needs assessment” that it was in the dark. “This lack of information means that the expected gap in funding ADA compliance over the next 10 years is unclear,” the assessment concluded.

Thinking of disability

In 1975, the United Kingdom-based Union of the Physically Impaired Against Segregation defined disability not as an individual condition but as an external inhibitor.

“In our view, it is society which disables physically impaired people,” its treatise read. “Disability is something imposed on top of our impairments, by the way we are unnecessarily isolated and excluded from full participation in society.”

For Monteros, using a wheelchair means her world is defined by the blocks she can go and those she can’t. Residential neighborhoods are mostly off-limits because their ramps are the worst kept. She does her best to let the daily inconveniences she faces slide off her back. But it can all get to be too much sometimes, like when a steep sidewalk tipped her backward with her groceries strapped to her chair, causing her to hit her head and triggering a grand mal seizure.

“I tend to get angry a lot of times,” she said.

The ADA was passed under a Republican president with Democratic votes. It ushered in an era of civil rights for people with disabilities. But in the humble curb ramp, a symbol emerges of the law’s limits, a reality Fogg saw up close in the U.S. Attorney’s Office.

“It’s a constant frustration that even though it was more than 30 years ago that they got a federal right, it frequently doesn’t translate into the real world,” she said. “A curb cut sounds like a minor issue and then it sounds expensive. But then when you think of the flip side, not having a curb cut for people who have a mobility disability means they cannot do things on that block. They just can’t. Huge groups of Americans just can’t be a part of regular life.”

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HEADLINE	10/03 Puget Sound Energy: rising utility costs
SOURCE	https://www.king5.com/article/traffic/gas-prices/puget-sound-energy-rising-natural-gas-bills/281-6874953d-f9e7-4ecf-a307-3e2ed00a5fa4
GIST	<p>BELLEVUE, Wash. — Puget Sound Energy (PSE) alerted customers to higher utility bills for the remainder of 2022 and into 2023 in a release Monday.</p> <p>The company cites a combination of factors, including "rising natural gas prices, state policy objectives for clean energy, and continued investments in system reliability and safety."</p>

	<p>Natural gas customers will see increases beginning in November, due to steadily climbing wholesale gas prices. PSE said it has filed a rate increase with the state Utilities and Transportation Commission (UTC) that would raise the typical residential customer's (using 64 therms per month) monthly bill by \$13 from \$75 to \$88, if approved.</p> <p>Electric customers also could see higher costs, as PSE filed an additional rate increase proposal earlier this year that would go into effect in January 2023. PSE said the request reflects "more than \$3.1 billion in investments over the last four years to boost reliability, enhance safety, and deliver on the state's clean energy policy objectives."</p> <p>If that increase is approved, the typical residential electric customer (using 800 kWh) would see a rate increase of \$8 in 2023 up to \$97. The rate for a typical customer would then rise by less than \$2 in 2024. The typical natural gas customer would see an increase of \$5 in 2023 under this proposal and an additional \$1 in 2024.</p> <p>"We are making our customers aware of these increases now, to give them time to learn about their options for controlling their energy usage and how to get help paying their energy bills," said Andy Wappler, PSE senior vice president and chief customer officer. "We are urging customers to take advantage of our bill assistance and energy efficiency programs to help them manage those higher costs."</p>
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HEADLINE	10/03 Protests against SODO shelter expansion
SOURCE	https://www.king5.com/article/news/local/seattle/protestors-demonstrate-shelter-site-king-county-seattle/281-69f7167e-c6ca-4caf-90af-caf4cd6bea90
GIST	<p>SEATTLE — King County's plans to expand a shelter near Seattle's Chinatown-International District would provide more space, a sobering center, and behavioral health support.</p> <p>However, some living nearby say there has not been enough community outreach and they have a lot of questions for the county.</p> <p>In the downtown Seattle area, about 750 people are sleeping outside each night and the county's plan would help bring more people inside, according to the county.</p> <p>Another week brought another rally with a protest about plans to expand the SODO shelter. Last Tuesday, community members crowded King County Council Chambers, and on Monday people demonstrated at the shelter's doorstep</p> <p>The shelter currently has 270 beds. The plan is to make space for an additional 150 people. Part of the expansion involves adding pallet homes.</p> <p>Protesters say they want to know the county's public safety plan is to protect people at the shelter and in surrounding neighborhoods.</p> <p>"They have said that, and I agree with this, people experiencing homelessness are not dangerous," said Leo Flor, the director of the Department of Community and Human Services. "What they have said is they are worried about the people who prey on them, I can't think of a better way to make people experiencing homelessness safer than bringing them inside instead of leaving them outside to be preyed upon."</p> <p>According to Seattle police, data shows in Chinatown-International District, the number of violent crime reports climbed from 175 in 2020 to nearly 250 in 2021. This year has already seen more than 200 violent crime calls.</p> <p>On September 21, in an interview Chief Adrian Diaz talked about the fact that there are already at least ten places offering shelter and, or services within a 30-minute walk from the SODO site.</p>

	<p>"Maybe we should just take a step back and really evaluate how much level of service is in this area because another one really could create an impact, almost permanently damaging the neighborhood," Chief Diaz said.</p> <p>Flor says the county is still working on its plans for this shelter.</p> <p>"Over here in SODO we are going to keep having a conversation with the community about how the facility can contribute to a safer environment for the people here and for the people in and around the shelter," Flor said.</p> <p>The county provides security at the shelter now. As the county looks to expand, Flor says they will work on the public safety plan with the City, Regional Homelessness Authority, and community members.</p>
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HEADLINE	10/03 Spokane gas prices rise; refinery issues
SOURCE	https://www.krem.com/article/money/economy/gas-prices-in-spokane-increase/293-06960e8b-92b7-45db-9599-232d0f284cad
GIST	<p>SPOKANE COUNTY, Wash. — Spokane gas prices have risen 20.2 cents per gallon in the last week. The current average cost is set at \$4.74 per gallon as of Monday.</p> <p>According to a GasBuddy survey, the national average gas cost increased for the second straight week as gas prices continued to surge on the West Coast and Great Lakes.</p> <p>The national average price of gas has increased 11.1 cents per gallon in the last week, averaging \$3.78 per gallon on Monday. The national average gas price is up 0.4 cents per gallon from a month ago and stands 59.8 cents per gallon higher than a year ago.</p> <p>GasBuddy head of petroleum analysis Patrick De Haan said that while prices continue increasing on the West Coast and Great Lakes, areas of the Northeast and Gulf Coast have seen gas price declines as the nation is experiencing sharp differences in trends between regions.</p> <p>"Some West Coast states saw prices rise 35 to 55 cents per gallon in the last week as refinery issues continued to impact gasoline supply, which fell to its lowest level in a decade in the region, causing prices to skyrocket," said De Haan.</p> <p>While in Washington, the gas price is up 46.3 cents per gallon from last week's \$4.73, and is set at \$5.19 as of Monday. In some parts of Idaho, the gas price remains is the same as last week at \$4.38 per gallon, according a GasBuddy survey.</p> <p>In another report by the American Automobile Association (AAA), Idaho's average price is a penny up from a week ago, but 11 cents less than a month ago. Drivers in North Idaho are paying much less than in other parts of the state, but prices still increased by 15 to 25 cents this week.</p> <p>Idaho's gas price ranks eighth in the U.S. for most expensive fuel behind California, Nevada, Oregon, Alaska, Washington, Hawaii and Arizona, according to the AAA report.</p> <p>In Spokane, the cheapest station was priced at \$4.45 per gallon on Sunday, while the most expensive was \$4.89 per gallon, a difference of 44 cents per gallon. Prices in Spokane are 31.0 cents per gallon higher than a month ago and stand \$1.13 per gallon higher than a year ago.</p> <p>While gas prices keep increasing in some states, the national average price of diesel has declined 2.9 cents in the last week and stands at \$4.86 per gallon as of Monday.</p>

	"While I'm hopeful there will eventually be relief, prices could go a bit higher before cooling off," Patrick De Haan said. "In addition, OPEC could decide to cut oil production by a million barrels as the global economy slows down, potentially creating a catalyst that could push gas prices up further."
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HEADLINE	10/03 India propping up Putin regime?
SOURCE	https://www.cnn.com/2022/10/03/india/india-russia-war-putin-modi-intl-hnk/index.html
GIST	<p>When Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi told Vladimir Putin “today’s era is not of war” last month, the West welcomed his comments as a sign the world’s largest democracy was finally coming off the fence about Russia’s unprovoked invasion of Ukraine.</p> <p>French President Emmanuel Macron praised Modi and the White House lauded what it called a “statement of principle.”</p> <p>But the reality, analysts say, is less straightforward.</p> <p>Rather than cutting economic ties with the Kremlin, India has undermined Western sanctions by increasing its purchases of Russian oil, coal and fertilizer – giving Putin a vital financial lifeline.</p> <p>New Delhi has repeatedly abstained from votes condemning Russia at the United Nations – providing Moscow with a veneer of international legitimacy. And in August, India participated in Russia’s large-scale Vostok military exercises alongside China, Belarus, Mongolia and Tajikistan – where Moscow paraded its vast arsenal.</p> <p>Last week, India abstained from another UN draft resolution condemning Russia over its sham referendums in four regions of Ukraine, which have been used as a pretext by Moscow to illegally annex Ukrainian territory – significantly upping the stakes in the war.</p> <p>India is “deeply disturbed” by the developments in Ukraine, said Ruchira Kamboj, New Delhi’s permanent representative to the UN, but stopped short of attributing blame and urged an “immediate ceasefire and resolution of the conflict.”</p> <p>This apparent contradiction exemplifies India’s unique position on the war: verbally distancing itself from Russia, while continuing to maintain pivotal ties with Moscow.</p> <p>Modi’s “stronger language to Putin” should be seen in the context of rising food, fuel and fertilizer prices, and the “hardships that was creating for other countries,” said Deepa Ollapally, research professor and director of the Rising Powers Initiative at the Elliott School of International Affairs, George Washington University.</p> <p>“There’s a certain level of impatience (for India) with the intensification of the war,” she said. “There’s a feeling that Putin is pushing India’s limits because in some ways, it’s put itself out on a limb. And it’s not a comfortable position for India to be in.”</p> <p>‘A tale of two Indias’</p> <p>As Russian troops massed on Ukraine’s border in December last year, Modi welcomed Putin in New Delhi during the 21st India-Russia Annual Summit.</p> <p>“My dear friend, President Vladimir Putin,” Modi said, “your attachment with India and your personal commitment symbolize the importance of India-Russia relations and I am very grateful to you for that.”</p> <p>New Delhi has strong ties with Moscow dating back to the Cold War, and India remains heavily reliant on the Kremlin for military equipment – a vital link given India’s ongoing tensions at its shared Himalayan border with an increasingly assertive China.</p>

But according to analysts, India is concerned that Putin's increasing isolation could draw Moscow closer to Beijing – and that requires India to tread carefully.

New Delhi's contorted maneuvering in its stance on Russia's aggression in Ukraine was on show when, alongside China, it took part in Russia's Vostok military exercises – a move attacked by its Western partners.

"This can be seen as a tale of two Indias," said Ollapally. "On the one hand, they are pushing back against China and then exercising along with China and Russia, giving Russia a certain amount of legitimacy."

Superficially at least, India and China also appear to have similar positions on the Ukraine war. Both have positioned themselves as neutral onlookers rather than vocal opponents. Both have also called for peace – but refused to condemn the invasion outright.

But that's where the similarities appear to end, analysts say.

China has decried Western sanctions and repeatedly blamed the United States and NATO for the conflict, parroting Russia's view that NATO precipitated the crisis by expanding eastwards. [Chinese state media has also amplified Russian talking points](#) and disinformation. India on the other hand has steered clear of criticizing NATO and has used stronger language to call for peace as the war intensifies.

But despite India's increasing closeness with the West, it is prioritizing the dangers in its own backyard, analysts say.

"China remains the big threat on India's borders and India would not want the Russia-China alliance to become very strong," said Sushant Singh, a senior fellow at New Delhi's Centre for Policy Research. "That is not in India's interest."

Principled stance

US President Joe Biden has, since the start of Russia's aggression, used Putin's war to bolster his global campaign for democracy.

"Ukraine and its people are on the front lines fighting to save their nation," he said during a speech in March. "And their brave resistance is part of a larger fight for an essential democratic principles that unite all free people."

While New Delhi's ties with the West have been growing ever closer since Modi's election in 2014, India, the world's largest democracy of 1.3 billion, isn't thinking along the same lines as the US.

For years after its independence, India's international relations were defined by its policy of non-alignment, the Cold War era stance that avoided siding with either the US or the Soviet Union.

Despite India's contemporary alliance with the West, and pressure from the US to take a stronger stand, that policy is continuing to play out, analysts say.

And according to Singh, India's actions "have been to protect its own self interests."

Speaking on the sidelines during a face-to-face meeting with Putin at the Shanghai Cooperation Organization summit last month, Modi said the world was facing challenges, including food and energy shortages, that were particularly affecting developing countries.

"I know that today's era is not of war and we have talked to you many times over the phone on the subject that democracy and diplomacy and dialogue are all these things that touch the world," Modi told Putin.

	<p>And under Modi's government – which has been decried for a clampdown on free speech and discriminatory policies toward minority groups – India risks being called hypocritical for doing so, according to Singh.</p> <p>“India has been very hesitant to raise issues about democracy because it has been called out again and again for its authoritarian nature and anti-democratic acts against religious minorities,” Singh said.</p> <p>But while Ollapally said what India was doing is “understandable” as a developing nation, New Delhi could do more to uphold democratic principles outlined in the preamble to the country's constitution.</p> <p>“I think there is certainly more that (India) could do on that front, at least in its statements, because it really doesn't have that much to lose by making those statements,” she said.</p>
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HEADLINE	10/04 Soldier behind Burkina Faso latest coup
SOURCE	https://www.reuters.com/world/africa/who-is-ibrahim-traore-soldier-behind-burkina-fasos-latest-coup-2022-10-03/
GIST	<p>DAKAR, Oct 3 (Reuters) - As a heavily armed convoy drove through a cheering crowd in Burkina Faso's capital on Sunday morning, the boyish face of the country's latest military ruler, Captain Ibrahim Traore, emerged from the turret of an armoured personnel carrier.</p> <p>Sporting fatigues and a red beret, the 34-year-old smiled and raised his thumb as onlookers welcomed him, some by waving Russian flags.</p> <p>Traore, a relatively low-ranking officer who days earlier was running an artillery regiment in a small northern town, has been catapulted onto the world stage since he and a group of soldiers overthrew President Paul-Henri Damiba in a Sept. 30 coup.</p> <p>Little is known about Traore and his colleagues, who since Friday have delivered statements on national television brandishing guns, ammunition belts and masks.</p> <p>They face gigantic challenges to alleviate hardship in one of the world's poorest countries where drought, food shortages and creaking health and education systems provide daily challenges for millions.</p> <p>Yet the initial focus has been conflict and politics.</p> <p>In an interview with Radio France International on Monday, Traore, a career soldier who has fought on the front lines against Islamist militants in the north, insisted he would not be in charge for long.</p> <p>A national conference will appoint a new interim ruler by the end of the year. That leader, who could be civilian or military, will honour an agreement with West Africa's regional bloc and oversee a return to civilian rule by 2024, he said.</p> <p>"We did not come to continue, we did not come for a particular purpose," he said. "All that matters when the level of security returns is the fight, it's development."</p> <p>Still, an early picture has emerged of what Traore's junta intends to do with its time in power.</p> <p>Their moves, which may include army reform and ties to new international partners such as Russia, could alter politics in West Africa and change how Burkina Faso fights an Islamist insurgency that has killed thousands and forced millions to flee.</p> <p>Army officers initially supported Damiba when he took power in his own coup in January, promising to defeat the Islamists. But they quickly lost patience. Damiba refused to reform the army, Traore's junta said. Attacks worsened. Just last week, at least 11 soldiers were killed in an attack in the north.</p>

Meanwhile, Russia has expressed support for the coup just as regional neighbours and western powers condemned it.

"I salute and support Captain Ibrahim Traore," read a statement from Russian businessman Yevgeny Prigozhin, founder of private military company Wagner Group, which has operations across Africa, including in Burkina Faso's neighbour Mali.

TIES WITH RUSSIA?

Ties with Russia would put a further strain on relations with former colonial power France, which has provided military support in recent years but has become the target of pro-Russian protests. Its embassy in Ouagadougou was attacked in the aftermath of Friday's coup.

Wagner's entry into Mali last year spelled the end to France's decade-long mission to contain Islamists linked to al Qaeda and Islamic State who have since spread into Burkina Faso.

Wagner and the Malian army have since been accused by rights groups and witnesses of widespread abuses, including the killing of hundreds of civilians in the town of Moura in March.

Burkina Faso's new leaders on Saturday stoked anti-French rioting when they said in a statement on television that France had sheltered Damiba at a military base and that he was planning a counter-offensive.

The French foreign ministry denied the base had hosted Damiba.

Traore is on a crash course in diplomacy. He downplayed the link between Damiba and France, and called an end to the protests. About ties with Russia, he was vague.

"There are many partners. France is a partner. There is no particular target," he told RFI.

Meanwhile, he must juggle everyday problems. On Sunday, he arrived in military fatigues to a meeting with ministerial officials which was streamed online.

Can the junta guarantee the safety of schools that reopen this week, they asked their new leader. What is being done about a tender for a railway link to Ghana?

Traore, who had to consult with advisers, did not have all the answers.

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HEADLINE	10/03 Fast-moving Nebraska wildfire; evacuations
SOURCE	https://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/fast-moving-nebraska-wildfire-scorches-15000-acres-forces-evacuations-rcna50453
GIST	<p>A fast-moving Nebraska wildfire that started Sunday afternoon and was "likely human-caused" has scorched an estimated 15,000 acres and forced evacuations, according to Nebraska National Forests & Grasslands.</p> <p>The blaze, which officials are calling the Bovee Fire, broke out Sunday afternoon in the Bessey Ranger District of Nebraska National Forest, said Travis Mason-Bushman, the forest's public information officer.</p> <p>More than 100 firefighters continued to battle the blaze Monday morning, said Mason-Bushman, who said crews hope to stop it from spreading on the west side after having reined it in on its east and north sides overnight.</p> <p>A longtime volunteer firefighter died after he suffered a medical emergency while trying to extinguish the blaze, The Associated Press reported.</p>

Mike Moody, 59, had been with the Purdum Volunteer Fire Department for four decades, according to the AP.

Video of the fire, [captured by NBC affiliate KSNB of York](#), shows flames and clouds of smoke billowing from the forest.

By 7:30 p.m. Sunday, the fire had spread to an estimated 15,000 acres and pushed 15 miles north, Mason-Bushman said. Firefighters were going to battle the blaze throughout the night, and residents were implored to “please heed all evacuation orders or warnings from local authorities,” Nebraska National Forests & Grasslands said Sunday.

The surrounding campgrounds and the nearby village of Halsey, in west-central Nebraska, were evacuated earlier Sunday, the agency said on Facebook.

The evacuation order for Halsey has since been lifted, Mason-Bushman said Monday, and Nebraska Highway 2 has also been reopened after it was closed for a few hours Sunday because of the blaze.

The national forest and its campgrounds remain closed and evacuated and will be “for some time to come,” Mason-Bushman said.

“We do have firefighters continuing the aggressive attack,” Mason-Bushman said, adding that Monday’s weather — with temperatures forecast for the high 70s and light winds expected — should be favorable for firefighting.

The fire caused “major devastation” at the Nebraska State 4-H Camp, [according to a Facebook post](#) from the youth camp, which said that the fire burned a lodge and cabins and that everyone who had been at the site had been safely evacuated.

Firefighters were able to save the forest’s more than century-old [Charles E. Bessey Tree Nursery](#), which “grows trees to reforest after fires like this one,” Mason-Bushman said.

The nursery, about a mile west of Halsey, is home to 1.5 million seedlings and “has a long-standing reputation for producing top-quality planting stock due to its deep sandy soils, abundant water and relatively long growing season,” [according to the U.S. Forest Service website](#).

The cause of the fire remains under investigation, Mason-Bushman said, adding that it is believed to have been caused by “some human influence” given that no lightning, which is normally the source of natural fires, was reported in the area.

“We treat these like a crime scene or like an aircraft accident — you’re going to have trained investigators looking at the site where the fire started, gathering all the evidence, before we state definitively exactly what happened,” he said.

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HEADLINE	10/03 Florida official defends evacuation delay
SOURCE	https://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/florida-official-defends-lee-county-delayed-evacuation-ian-made-landfa-rcna50447
GIST	<p>Hurricane Ian’s death toll reached 100 Monday as Florida’s top emergency administrator pushed back against growing criticism of Lee County officials who were accused of being slow to evacuate low-lying communities.</p> <p>The latest count was 96 deaths in Florida and four in North Carolina. Lee County, Florida, where officials didn’t order evacuations until Tuesday, 54 had been confirmed dead. Ian made landfall Wednesday, devastating Fort Myers and Sanibel Island.</p>

"I believe Lee County and their administration made the best decision they felt was right for their community at that time," said Kevin Guthrie, the director of the Florida Division of Emergency Management. "And I will never second-guess a local emergency manager on their decision."

While other nearby jurisdictions took such action a day or two earlier than Lee County, he refused to criticize the decisions.

"Emergency management directors do not have a crystal ball," Guthrie told reporters. "They made the best decision on the information they had at the time."

Monday night, Gov. Ron DeSantis was focused on the rescue efforts.

"Let's spend a little more time ... maybe thanking the people that are out there on the front lines saving people's lives," he said from Cape Coral, part of the hard-hit region of southwest Florida.

The governor said first responders and support crews have made more than 1,900 rescues since the storm hit Thursday.

A representative of the Lee County Manager's Office could not be immediately reached for comment Monday.

Huge swaths of southwest and central Florida were still struggling to pick up the pieces and turn on lights days after Ian blew through their communities last week.

Florida residents, left without power in the wake of Ian, could be in the dark for the rest of the week — if they dodged major storm damage.

There were 527,921 homes and businesses without power Monday, according to PowerOutage.us. In those houses and commercial buildings where "infrastructure is still standing," power should be back by Sunday, officials said.

Authorities also asked Floridians to stay home and out of the way of rescue and cleanup crews Monday.

"If you don't need to be on the roadways, don't be on the roadways," said Col. Gene Spaulding, the director of the Florida Highway Patrol.

He also warned motorists that a multitude of roads and bridges are still not safe for passage.

"We still have several roadways that are under water. Keep in mind that just because the water recedes, don't necessarily mean the roadway is safe to travel on," Spaulding said.

"There is high likelihood of washouts under the asphalt, under the roadways. So please don't try to drive around barricades."

Remnants of the one-time Category 4 storm continued to douse the mid-Atlantic on Monday with rain. About 16 million were under flood alerts in coastal North Carolina, Virginia, Maryland, Delaware and New Jersey.

High winds and rain will continue in these communities Monday and Tuesday with up to 3 inches in coastal regions and up to an inch in more inland areas.

High winds were expected to blow through Norfolk, Virginia (45 mph), Atlantic City, New Jersey (34 mph), Washington, D.C., (36 mph), New York (29 mph) and Boston (29 mph) on Monday.

HEADLINE	10/04 Alarm: Europe energy crisis; warning for US
SOURCE	https://www.foxbusiness.com/politics/energy-experts-sound-alarm-europes-energy-crisis-clear-present-warning-america
GIST	<p>FIRST ON FOX: A group of energy and environment experts are sounding the alarm on U.S. climate policy and pointing to Europe's crisis as an example of "blindly" abandoning energy security.</p> <p>In a letter Tuesday, the coalition of six experts urged congressional Republican leaders — Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., and House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy, R-Calif. — to consider how green policies have contributed to the energy crisis in Europe. They added that the crisis proves the U.S. lawmakers need to bolster, not "compromise," energy security.</p> <p>"The actual environmental benefits of 'green' energy are few and far between, if there are any at all. Yet its economic and national security impact is immeasurably negative," the experts wrote in the letter.</p> <p>"Compromising American energy security for the sake of climate alarmism is more than a misstep, it is a catastrophic error — just look at Europe."</p> <p>"Defending our nation's energy economy and independence must be a priority," they continued. "Europe's energy crisis sits as a clear and present warning of what may lie ahead if we continue down this road, let us not follow them blindly into the same disaster."</p> <p>In recent months, European consumers and businesses have been hit with massive energy bills due to Russia's invasion of Ukraine, which upended global oil and gas markets due to Russian producers' dominance, and an aggressive transition to green energy sources like wind and solar pushed by several major European nations.</p> <p>Amid the crisis, Europeans have been forced to take drastic measures to conserve energy and keep bills low while governments have imposed rationing rules and introduced relief programs. The letter noted that the crisis has forced manufacturing plants to close and will likely lead to major blackouts throughout the winter in Germany.</p> <p>"For political reasons, Europe chose to rely on renewable energy and also oil from hostile sources — in this case being Russia," James Taylor, the president of think tank Heartland Institute, told FOX Business in an interview. "Here we have in the United States, we're being told by the environmental left, by the administration, that we should choose the same path, that we should be focusing on renewable energy. That's just a terrible path."</p> <p>"In Europe, you see electricity prices that are approximately double what they are here in the United States," he continued. "That, again, is because of the choices that they have made for renewable energy and relying on a hostile nation. We're setting ourselves up for the same thing, which would definitely be a bad idea."</p> <p>Taylor was among the experts who signed the letter to McConnell and McCarthy on Tuesday.</p> <p>He was joined by Craig Rucker, the president of the Committee for a Constructive Tomorrow; Kent Lassman, the president of the Competitive Enterprise Institute (CEI); Myron Ebell, the director of CEI's Center for Energy and Environment; Gregory Wrightstone, the executive director of the CO2 Coalition; and Steve Milloy, a senior legal fellow at the Energy & Environment Legal Institute.</p> <p>"What I'm hearing from the eco left is that the solution to our energy problems is more wind and solar — we just haven't done enough of it," Wrightstone told FOX Business in an interview. "The fact of the matter is: for every megawatt or terawatt of unreliable energy, you need to build the same amount of reliable backup source."</p> <p>"For one, that's when the wind stops blowing and the sun stops shining. So, what we're doing is probably doubling the cost of electricity generation and then all those facilities that you built, will sit idle until they're needed."</p>

While energy analysts have warned that Europe may be turning to green sources of energy too quickly, European Union leaders have doubled down on the transition. European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen said in August that the traditional model for an electricity market is "no longer fit for purpose."

Last year, the EU unveiled a framework for a massive overhaul of energy policies including a plan to massively reduce carbon emissions by investing more in renewables and limiting gas-powered vehicle purchases. The Biden administration has taken a similar approach, limiting fossil fuel production and pushing solar, wind and electric vehicles.

"All this stuff puts us on the path to becoming Europe and climate foolishness has caused all the problems that are going on in Europe right now," Milloy told FOX Business.

"They started getting rid of their coal plants, replacing them with wind and solar," Milloy added. "In the case of Germany, Germany spent more than \$500 billion doing that. You get to 2021 and then all of a sudden, the wind stops blowing in Europe or declines a little bit. And that started the energy crisis because if there's no wind, then you have to burn more natural gas."

An analysis from Reuters published in December concluded that lower-than-expected wind power generation caused EU energy prices to increase and forced a return to natural gas and, in many cases, coal. Between 2019 and 2021, wind power alone accounted for the largest share of electricity production in Germany, the EU's largest economy.

Milloy said when EU nations turned back to natural gas, they were forced to boost Russian imports, encouraging Russian President Vladimir Putin proceed with his invasion of Ukraine.

"The whole thing has just been a disaster for Europe," he said.

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HEADLINE	10/03 Ukraine claws back more territory
SOURCE	https://www.cbsnews.com/news/ukraine-russia-troops-continue-offensive-claim-new-gains/
GIST	<p>Ukrainian forces scored more gains in their counteroffensive across at least two fronts Monday, advancing in the very areas that Russia is trying to absorb and challenging Moscow's effort to engage fresh troops and its threats to defend incorporated areas by all means.</p> <p>In their latest breakthrough, Ukrainian forces penetrated Moscow's defenses in the strategic southern Kherson region, one of the four areas in Ukraine that Russia is in the process of annexing.</p> <p>Kyiv's troops also consolidated gains in the east and other major battlefields, re-establishing Ukrainian control just as Russian President Vladimir Putin is trying to overcome problems with manpower, weapons, troop morale and logistics, along with intensifying domestic and international criticism. Putin faces disarray and anger domestically about his partial troop mobilization and confusion about the establishment of new Russian borders.</p> <p>Ukraine's advances have become so apparent that even Russian Defense Ministry spokesman Igor Konashenkov, who usually focuses on his military's successes and the enemy's losses, was forced to acknowledge it.</p> <p>"With numerically superior tank units in the direction of Zolota Balka and Oleksandrivka, the enemy managed to forge deep into our defenses," Konashenkov said Monday, referring to two towns in the Kherson region. He coupled that with claims that Russian forces inflicted heavy losses on Ukraine's military.</p>

Ukrainian forces have struggled to retake the Kherson region due to its open terrain, in contrast to their successful breakout offensive in the northeast around the country's second-largest city of Kharkiv that began last month.

Ukraine has pressed its counteroffensive in the Kherson region since the summer, relentlessly pummeling Russian supply lines and making inroads into Russian-held areas west of the Dnieper River. The Ukrainian military has used U.S.-supplied HIMARS multiple rocket launchers to repeatedly hit the main bridge across the Dnieper and a dam that served as a second crossing. It also has struck pontoon bridges that Russia has used to supply its troops.

As the front lines shifted, Russia's lower house of parliament rubber-stamped annexation treaties for Ukraine's Kherson, Zaporizhzhia, Donetsk and Luhansk regions to join Russia. The upper house will follow suit Tuesday. This follows annexation referendums that the Kremlin orchestrated last week that the U.N. chief and Western nations have said were illegal and fraudulent.

Russia's moves to incorporate the Ukrainian regions, as well as Putin's effort to mobilize more troops, have been done so hastily that government officials have struggled to explain and implement them. On Monday, the issue was basic: Exactly what areas of Ukraine is Russia trying to incorporate?

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said Donetsk and Luhansk are joining Russia with the same administrative borders that existed before a conflict erupted there in 2014 between pro-Russian separatists and Ukrainian forces. But he added that the borders of Zaporizhzhia and Kherson are still undecided.

"We will continue to discuss that with residents of those regions," Peskov said.

A senior Russian lawmaker offered a different view. Pavel Krasheninnikov said Zaporizhzhia will be absorbed within its "administrative borders," meaning Moscow plans to incorporate parts of the region still under Kyiv's control. He said similar logic will apply to Kherson, but that Russia will include two districts of the neighboring Mykolaiv region that are now occupied by Russia.

In addition to the Kherson areas that Russia's Defense Ministry cited, other sources showed Ukrainian flags, soldiers deployed or other signs that Kyiv's forces had retaken the villages of Arkhanhelske, Myroliubivka, Khreshchenivka, Mykhalivka and Novovorontsovka. There was no immediate confirmation from Kyiv on the gains.

The situation in the regional capital, also called Kherson, was so precarious that Russian authorities are restricting people from leaving, Ukraine's presidential office said.

A Russian-installed official in the Kherson region, Kirill Stremousov, acknowledged that the Ukrainian forces "have broken through a little deeper" but insisted that "everything is under control" and that Russia's "defense system is working."

Still, Russia claimed some success at pushing back. The Moscow-appointed chief of the Kherson region, Vladimir Saldo, said Ukrainian troops tried to advance toward Dudchany along the Dnieper's western bank, seeking to reach a key dam at Nova Kakhovka, but that Russian warplanes destroyed two Ukrainian battalions and halted the offensive. Saldo also said Russian forces fended off Ukraine's attempted inroads into the Kherson region from Mykolaiv and Kryvyi Rih.

Neither Saldo's nor Stremousov's claims could be independently verified.

Ukraine reported advances in other areas Russia is annexing. The Ukrainian governor of the Luhansk region, Serhiy Haidai, said Kyiv's forces retook the village of Torske, 12 miles from the city of Kreminna. Ukrainian military analyst Oleh Zhdanov said the area is "key for controlling the entire Luhansk region, because further beyond (the city) the Russians don't have any more lines of defenses."

Return to Top	<p>"Retaking this city opens up operational space for Ukrainians to rapidly advance to the very state border with Russia," Zhdanov told The Associated Press.</p> <p>He said Russian troops had retreated from the Kharkiv region. Ukraine's army reportedly liberated most of Borova in the Kharkiv region across the Oskil River, 31 miles north of the city of Lyman. Officials posted a video while driving along recaptured streets, waving the Ukrainian flag.</p> <p>"Finally, you are home. Finally, it's Ukraine. Glory to Ukraine!" an onlooker yelled.</p> <p>Elsewhere in the Kharkiv region, a doctor was killed and nurse wounded in a Russian missile attack on a hospital in Kupiansk that caused major damage, Gov. Oleh Syniehubov reported. Last week, at least 24 civilians were killed in an attack on a convoy trying to flee Kupiansk.</p> <p>Ukraine also has retaken Lyman, a strategic eastern city that the Russians had used as a key logistics and transport hub. Lyman is in the Donetsk region near the border with Luhansk.</p> <p>Ukraine's push to recapture territory has embarrassed the Kremlin and prompted rare domestic criticism of Putin's war. Tens of thousands of Russian men have fled Russia since the Sept. 21 call-up. Many flew to Turkey, one of the few countries maintaining air links with Russia. Others have left in cars, creating long traffic jams at the Russian borders with Georgia, Kazakhstan and Finland.</p> <p>The International Atomic Energy Agency, the U.N.'s nuclear watchdog, said Monday that the director general of the Russian-occupied Zaporizhzhia nuclear plant — Europe's largest — had been released from Russian custody. Russian forces had blindfolded and detained Ihor Murashov on Friday for questioning.</p>
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HEADLINE	10/03 UN: Pakistan flood victims face food crisis
SOURCE	https://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/57-million-pakistani-flood-victims-face-food-crisis-90908112
GIST	<p>ISLAMABAD -- The United Nations humanitarian agency warned Monday that about 5.7 million Pakistani flood survivors will face a serious food crisis in the next three months.</p> <p>A top U.N. official announced an increase in the humanitarian appeal for Pakistan to \$816 million, from \$160 million, amid rising deaths from disease.</p> <p>In Geneva, Julien Harneis, the U.N. resident coordinator in Pakistan, told reporters that aid agencies needed more funds to prevent a "second wave of destruction" from waterborne and other diseases in Pakistan. He said the U.N. weeks ago issued an appeal for \$160 million in emergency funding to respond to the floods but considering the scale of devastation, the Aug. 30 appeal was not enough.</p> <p>The latest development comes hours after Pakistan's National Disaster Management Authority reported that floods fueled by abnormally heavy monsoon rains have killed 1,695 people, affected 33 million, damaged more than 2 million homes and displaced hundreds of thousands now living in tents or makeshift homes.</p> <p>The U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in its latest report Saturday said the current floods are expected to exacerbate food insecurity in Pakistan and said 5.7 million people in flood-affected areas will be facing a food crisis between September and November.</p> <p>Even before the floods, according to the World Health Organization, 16% of the population was living in moderate or severe food insecurity.</p> <p>However, Pakistan's government insists that there is no immediate worry about food supplies, as wheat stocks are enough to last through the next harvest and that the government is importing more.</p>

The U.N. agency said in a tweet on Monday that the agency and other partners have scaled up their flood response and delivered aid to 1.6 million people directly affected by the deluges.

OCHA said outbreaks of waterborne and other diseases are on the rise in Sindh and southwestern Baluchistan provinces, where floods have caused the most damage since mid-June.

Several countries and U.N. agencies have sent more than 131 flights carrying aid for survivors, but many are complaining they have either received too little help or are still waiting for it.

The U.N. humanitarian agency also said in its Saturday report that rainfall in Baluchistan and Sindh lightened substantially over the past week, as temperatures start to decrease ahead of winter.

“Normal conditions are prevailing in most districts of Baluchistan, while in Sindh, the Indus River is flowing normally,” said OCHA. Overall, it added, in 18 out of 22 districts of Sindh, floodwater levels had receded at least 34%, and in some districts up to 78%.

The OCHA report also highlighted the ordeal of flood survivors, saying many continue to live in “unsanitary conditions in temporary shelters, often with limited access to basic services, compounding the risk of a major public health crisis.”

It said pregnant women are being treated in temporary camps when possible, and nearly 130,000 pregnant women need urgent health services.

“Already before the floods, Pakistan had one of the highest maternal mortality rates in Asia, with the situation likely to deteriorate,” it said.

Pakistan says floods caused about \$30 billion of damage to its economy.

Floods washed away thousands of kilometers of roads, destroyed 440 bridges, and disrupted railroad traffic.

Pakistan Railways said it has started restoring train service from Sindh to other cities after repairing some of the tracks damaged by floods.

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HEADLINE	10/03 Poland demands WWII reparations: \$1.3T
SOURCE	https://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/poland-demands-13-trillion-war-damages-germany-90912498
GIST	<p>WARSAW, Poland -- Poland’s foreign minister on Monday signed an official note to Germany requesting the payment of about \$1.3 trillion in reparations for the damage incurred by occupying Nazi Germans during World War II.</p> <p>Zbigniew Rau said the note will be handed to Germany’s Foreign Ministry. The signing comes on the eve of Rau’s meeting in Warsaw with German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock, who will attend a security conference.</p> <p>Rau said the note expresses his view that the two sides should take action “without delay” to address the effects of Germany’s 1939-45 occupation in a “lasting and complex, legally binding as well as material way.”</p> <p>He said that would include German reparations as well as solving the issue of looted artworks, archives and bank deposits. He said Berlin should make efforts to inform German society about the “true” picture of the war and its disastrous effects on Poland.</p> <p>Warsaw says that payment of reparations would strengthen bilateral relations through truth and justice and would close painful chapters from the past. Germany says the matter was closed decades ago.</p>

Baerbock said in Berlin before departing for Poland that the two European neighbors and partners have a "responsibility to preserve the trust we have built together over the past 30 years."

Baerbock stressed that "this includes that coming to terms with and remembering the immeasurable suffering that Germany brought upon the people of Poland."

"There cannot and will not be a line drawn here," Baerbock said.

Poland's right-wing government argues that the country hasn't been fully compensated by neighboring Germany, which is now one of its major partners within the European Union.

On the war's 83rd anniversary, Sept. 1, Poland's government presented an extensive report on the damages, estimating it at the \$1.3 trillion figure.

Poland's government rejects a 1953 declaration by the country's then communist leaders, under pressure from the Soviet Union, that Poland wouldn't make any further claims on Germany.

Germany argues compensation was paid to Eastern Bloc nations in the years after the war, while territories that Poland lost in the east as borders were redrawn were compensated with some of Germany's prewar lands. Berlin calls the matter closed. It was Moscow that decided Poland would receive only a small fraction of the compensation.

In the 1990s Germany paid one-time compensation to former inmates of Nazi concentration camps and to victims of forced labor, including many Poles.

Despite good bilateral relations, Poland's most powerful politician, Jaroslaw Kaczynski, has recently made increasingly hostile remarks about Germany, recalling its wartime guilt and alleging that it is dominating the European Union.

Critics see that as tactics aimed at rallying backing ahead of general elections scheduled next fall. Opinion polls suggest the ruling Law and Justice party and its allies will lose the narrow majority that now allows them to pass legislation without negotiating with other parties.

Senate Speaker Tomasz Grodzki, a member of the opposition, said anti-German rhetoric was shaping up to be the ruling party's mantra for the upcoming election — that voting against the ruling party was voting against Poland's interests.

"This is evident nonsense; it's untrue. It's a desperate attempt at defense against surveys that show falling support," Grodzki said.

Around 6 million of Poland's citizens, including 3 million Jews, were killed in the war. Some of them were victims of the Soviet Red Army that invaded from the east.

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HEADLINE	10/03 Iran protests violent confrontations, arrests
SOURCE	https://abcnews.go.com/International/student-protesters-iran-tear-gassed-arrested-police-report/story?id=90624613
GIST	<p>LONDON -- The third week of nationwide protests in Iran turned particularly violent Sunday when security forces besieged Sharif University, a prominent university in the country, and closed the main gates of the facility where hundreds of students were protesting.</p> <p>The violent confrontation led to arrests and injuries, according to eyewitnesses who shared their accounts on social media sites such as Vahid Online.</p>

The unrest swept the country after the suspicious death of Mahsa Amini, a 22-year-old woman who died in the custody of the morality police, which arrests women for not wearing a hijab properly. Protests, however, soon went beyond the condemnation of the morality police and turned into a movement against the Islamic Republic, with slogans demanding the toppling of the regime.

Reports from inside Sharif University Sunday night described the atmosphere as “dreadful.” Many shared accounts of students being trapped inside the university and told to leave the premises through a parking garage. Once they got there, however, the students found themselves encircled by the guards who were waiting to arrest them, the Sharif University Islamic Association reported. Students were tear-gassed and shot by pellet guns, paintballs and rubber bullets, according to the association.

In his first comments about the protests since they broke out on Sept. 17, Iranian leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei blamed the U.S. and Israel for the unrest.

"The incident that happened in which a young girl died was a bitter one. Our hearts were also broken," he said Saturday in a graduation address for the country's armed forces.

Accusing protesters of making the streets “unsafe” by setting cars and banks on fire, he said people should have waited for the results of the “investigation.”

"I say clearly that the riot is designed by America, the Zionist regime and those on their payroll," Khamenei said, alleging that some of the protesters have links to the country's former monarch or some of its opposition groups. According to the Iranian penal system, such accusations can put people behind bars for years or even put them at risk of execution.

According to Iran Human Right, the death toll from the protests was 133 on Sunday, 40 of whom were killed in an attack in the southeastern city of Zahedan on Sept. 30.

State-linked media, however, confirmed only 19 of the casualties in Zahedan and accused "separatists" of the attacks in the southeast.

The Islamic Association of Sharif University Students said it invited “students and professors of universities across the country to close their classes as a sign of solidarity with the professors and students of Sharif University.”

The call for the strike was received by many university students who kept protesting despite the crackdown on the Sharif University protests.

While other strikes were announced by small business owners, teachers and some labor associations, the excessive violence against university students has raised concerns.

The first open call for a strike was issued by the Coordinating Council of Teachers' Cultural Associations on Sept. 26. The Council “strongly condemned” the violent action taken by the state against protesters, especially students, and asked all working and retired educators to stand with the protesters.

“Nationwide strikes cause psychological pressure on the repressive forces to realize that many people agree with the protesters,” a Health Ministry employee told ABC News. He asked that his name not be used for fear of retribution.

“I hope people understand they would be better off striking in the long run because nothing matters as much as togetherness and unity,” he said.

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HEADLINE	10/03 Iran leader blames 'rioting' on US, Israel
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SOURCE	https://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/irans-supreme-leader-breaks-silence-protests-blames-us-90909676
GIST	<p>DUBAI, United Arab Emirates -- Iran's supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei responded publicly on Monday to the biggest protests in Iran in years, breaking weeks of silence to condemn what he called "rioting" and accuse the United States and Israel of planning the protests.</p> <p>The unrest, ignited by the death of a young woman in the custody of Iran's morality police, is flaring up across the country for a third week despite government efforts to crack down.</p> <p>On Monday, Iran shuttered its top technology university following an hours-long standoff between students and the police that turned the prestigious institution into the latest flashpoint of protests and ended with hundreds of young people arrested.</p> <p>Speaking to a cadre of police students in Tehran, Khamenei said he was "deeply heartbroken" by the death of 22-year-old Mahsa Amini in police custody, calling it a "tragic incident." However, he lambasted the protests as a foreign plot to destabilize Iran, echoing authorities' previous comments.</p> <p>"This rioting was planned," he said. "These riots and insecurities were designed by America and the Zionist regime, and their employees."</p> <p>Meanwhile, Sharif University of Technology in Tehran announced that only doctoral students would be allowed on campus until further notice following hours of turmoil Sunday, when witnesses said antigovernment protesters clashed with pro-establishment students.</p> <p>The witnesses, who spoke on condition of anonymity for fear of reprisals, said the police kept hundreds of students holed up on campus and fired rounds of tear gas to disperse the demonstrations. The student association said plainclothes officers surrounded the school from all sides as protests roiled the campus after nightfall and detained at least 300 students.</p> <p>Plainclothes officers beat a professor and several university employees, the association added.</p> <p>The state-run IRNA news agency sought to downplay the violent standoff, reporting a "protest gathering" took place without causing casualties. But it also said police released 30 students from detention, acknowledging many had been caught in the dragnet by mistake as they tried to go home.</p> <p>The crackdown sparked backlash on Monday at home and abroad.</p> <p>"Suppose we beat and arrest, is this the solution?" asked a column in the Jomhuri Eslami daily, a hard-line Iranian newspaper. "Is this productive?"</p> <p>German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock condemned the "the regime's brute force" at Sharif University as "an expression of sheer fear at the power of education and freedom."</p> <p>"The courage of Iranians is incredible," she said.</p> <p>U.S. President Joe Biden said he remains "gravely concerned about reports of the intensifying violent crackdown on peaceful protestors in Iran, including students and women, who are demanding their equal rights and basic human dignity."</p> <p>"The United States stands with Iranian women and all the citizens of Iran who are inspiring the world with their bravery," Biden said in a statement.</p> <p>U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres told reporters: "It is absolutely essential to show maximum restraint, maximum containment, when dealing (with) demonstrations all over the world, and the same is valid, obviously, for Iran."</p>

Iran's latest protest movement, which has produced some of the nation's most widespread unrest in years, emerged as a response to Amini's death after her arrest for allegedly violating the country's strict Islamic dress code. It has since grown into an open challenge to the Iranian leadership, with women burning their state-mandated headscarves and chants of "Death to the dictator," echoing from streets and balconies after dark.

The demonstrations have tapped a deep well of grievances in Iran, including the country's social restrictions, political repression and ailing economy strangled by American sanctions. The unrest has continued in Tehran and far-flung provinces even as authorities have disrupted internet access and blocked social media apps.

Protests also have spread across the Middle East and to Europe and North America. Thousands poured into the streets of Los Angeles to show solidarity. Police scuffled with protesters outside Iranian embassies in London and Athens. Crowds chanted "Woman! Life! Freedom!" in Paris.

In his remarks on Monday, Khamenei condemned scenes of protesters ripping off their hijabs and setting fire to mosques, banks and police cars as "actions that are not normal, that are unnatural." He warned that "those who foment unrest to sabotage the Islamic Republic deserve harsh prosecution and punishment."

Security forces have responded with tear gas, metal pellets and in some cases live fire, according to rights groups and widely shared footage, although the scope of the crackdown remains unclear.

Iran's state TV has reported the death toll from violent clashes between protesters and security officers could be as high as 41. Rights groups have given higher death counts, with London-based Amnesty International saying it has identified 52 victims.

An untold number of people have been apprehended, with local officials reporting at least 1,500 arrests. Security forces have picked up artists who have voiced support for the protests and dozens of journalists. Most recently Sunday, authorities arrested Alborz Nezami, a reporter at an economic newspaper in Tehran.

Iran's intelligence ministry said nine foreigners have been detained over the protests. A 30-year-old Italian traveler named Alessia Piperno called her parents on Sunday to say she had been arrested, her father Alberto Piperno told Italian news agency ANSA.

"We are very worried," he said. "The situation isn't going well."

Most of the protesters appear to be under 25, according to witnesses — Iranians who have grown up knowing little but global isolation and severe Western sanctions linked to Iran's nuclear program. Talks to revive the landmark 2015 nuclear deal have stalled for months, fueling discontent as Iran's currency declines in value and prices soar.

A Tehran-based university teacher, Shahindokht Kharazmi, said the new generation has come up with unpredictable ways to defy authorities.

"The (young protesters) have learned the strategy from video games and play to win," Kharazmi told the pro-reform Etemad newspaper. "There is no such thing as defeat for them."

As the new academic year began this week, students at universities in major cities across Iran gathered in protest, according to videos widely shared on social media, clapping, chanting slogans against the government and waving their headscarves.

The eruption of student anger has worried the Islamic Republic since at least 1999, when security forces and supporters of hard-line clerics attacked students protesting media restrictions. That wave of student protests under former reformist President Mohammad Khatami touched off the worst street battles since the 1979 Islamic Revolution.

	<p>“Don’t call it a protest, it’s a revolution now,” shouted students at Shahid Beheshti University in Tehran, as women set their hijabs alight.</p> <p>“Students are awake, they hate the leadership!” chanted crowds at the University of Mazandaran in the country's north.</p> <p>Riot police have been out in force, patrolling streets near universities on motorbikes.</p>
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HEADLINE	10/03 Russian state media frustration Ukraine war
SOURCE	https://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/frustration-ukraine-war-spills-russian-state-tv-90938165
GIST	<p>Russia’s retreat from a key Ukrainian city over the weekend elicited outcry from an unlikely crowd – state-run media outlets that typically cast Moscow’s war in glowing terms.</p> <p>A series of embarrassing military losses in recent weeks has presented a challenge for prominent hosts of Russian news and political talk shows struggling to find ways to paint Ukraine's gains in a way that is still favorable to the Kremlin.</p> <p>Frustration with the battlefield setbacks has long been expressed in social media blogs run by nationalist pundits and pro-Kremlin analysts, and the volume grew after Ukraine's counteroffensive last month around Kharkiv in the northeast. But it is now spilling out on state TV broadcasts and in the pages of government-backed newspapers.</p> <p>The less conciliatory tone from state-run media comes as President Vladimir Putin faces widespread Russian discontent about his partial mobilization of reservists and as government officials struggle to explain plans to annex Ukrainian regions at the same time they are being retaken by Kyiv’s forces.</p> <p>“The Russian defeat in Kharkiv (region) and Lyman, combined with the Kremlin’s failure to conduct partial mobilization effectively and fairly are fundamentally changing the Russian information space,” Washington-based Institute for the Study of War said in a report.</p> <p>On Sunday, after Ukraine recaptured Lyman, a city in the east that Russian troops had used as a key logistics and transport hub, Putin’s media allies dropped the niceties and more directly criticized his military, saying tougher measures were necessary for the sake of victory.</p> <p>“What happened on Saturday, Lyman – it is a serious challenge for us,” Vladimir Solovyov, host of a prime-time talk show on state TV channel Russia 1 and one of the Kremlin’s biggest cheerleaders, said on air Sunday. “We need to pull it together, make unpopular, but necessary decisions and act.”</p> <p>Ukrainian forces retook Lyman one day after Moscow celebrated its illegal annexation of four Ukrainian regions, including Donetsk, roughly 40% of which — now including Lyman - is under Kyiv’s control.</p> <p>The move paves the way for Ukrainian troops to potentially push even further into land that Moscow illegally claims as its own. Ukrainian forces scored more gains in their counteroffensive across at least two fronts Monday, advancing in the very areas Russia moved to absorb.</p> <p>The leader of Chechnya, a Russian region in the North Caucasus, blamed the retreat in Lyman on one general. In an online post, Ramzan Kadyrov, an outspoken supporter of the Kremlin, said the general's incompetence was being “covered up for by higher-up leaders in the General Staff,” and called for “more drastic measures” to be taken.”</p> <p>A story about the Lyman retreat in Russia’s popular pro-Kremlin tabloid, Komsomolskaya Pravda, painted a bleak picture of the Russian military. The story, published Sunday, said the Russian forces in Lyman were plagued by supply and manpower shortages, poor coordination, and tactical mistakes orchestrated by military officials.</p>

“It’s like it has always been,” according to an unnamed soldier quoted in the story who was part of the group that retreated from Lyman to Kreminna, another strategically important city that is in the sights of the Ukrainian army. “There is effectively no communication between different units.”

Posting on the social media app Telegram, Russian war correspondents working for state media were also abuzz with reports of the retreat, and some expressed concern about Ukraine's further push towards Kreminna.

“It turns out that the Armed Forces of Ukraine pushed through our defense 30 kilometers in the direction of Luhansk in two days ... So they don’t even let (the Russian forces) settle near Kreminna. Wow,” Russia 1 war correspondent Alexander Sladkov wrote on his Telegram channel that currently has almost 940,000 followers.

Hosts of popular news and political talk shows on the state Russia 1 TV channel on Sunday described the loss of Lyman as a “tough situation.”

On Sunday, soldiers quoted by state-run media gave analyses of the situation that at least partly meshed with Putin's: They blamed the Russian army's difficulties on NATO, saying that members of the alliance provided weapons and even fighters to Ukraine.

“It is not a game, it hasn’t been a game for a long time already,” one soldier told a Russia 1 reporter in the Donetsk region. “It is a painstaking, clear offensive of the NATO army.”

To back up his claim, the soldier claimed that communications intercepted by the Russian army feature people speaking Romanian and Polish; he didn’t explain how he or other soldiers could recognize either of the languages.

Media personalities also echoed the argument that Putin has been making.

Prime-time show host Solovyov in his program on Sunday stressed that Moscow is “not dealing with Ukraine – we’re past that. We’re dealing with the entire NATO bloc, with the might of its military industrial complex.”

He warned “not to wait for good news” from the battlefield any time soon. “One must have a long will and strategic patience,” Solovyov said.

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HEADLINE	10/04 NKorea fires ballistic missile over Japan
SOURCE	https://abcnews.go.com/International/north-korea-fires-apparent-ballistic-missile-japan-ministry/story?id=90941767
GIST	<p>North Korea fired what appeared to be a ballistic missile over Japan on Tuesday, the country's Ministry of Defense.</p> <p>The apparent ballistic missile was launched at 7:22 a.m. local time and passed over Japan at 7:29 a.m., the Japanese Ministry of Defense announced.</p> <p>The government of South Korea confirmed that the Japanese government warned citizens to take shelter. The missile likely flew over Japan, but it is still unknown whether the missile fell into the sea.</p> <p>A U.S. defense official confirmed to ABC News that North Korea launched a ballistic missile over Japan on Tuesday local time but didn't offer other specifics.</p> <p>Residents in Aomori and Hokkaido prefectures, toward the northern end of Japan, were advised to be on alert and to notify police or fire officials if debris is seen.</p>

People were also warned by officials not to touch or pick up any debris.

The office of Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida began to gather members to analyze the situation.

A government spokesperson said no damage has been reported so far and a search is underway for debris. Officials are gathering information and will work with South Korea and the U.S.

"North Korea's actions threaten Japan and the international community," the spokesperson said. "Missile launches like this go against the U.N. resolutions. Japan will launch a strong protest against North Korea in light of this. All new information will be shared promptly."

The White House said in a statement late Monday local time in Washington, D.C., that "the United States strongly condemns the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's (DPRK) dangerous and reckless decision to launch a long-range ballistic missile over Japan."

U.S. National Security Adviser Jake Sullivan spoke with his Japanese and South Korean counterparts on Monday night local time, according to White House National Security Council spokesperson Adrienne Watson.

"In both calls, the National Security Advisors consulted on appropriate and robust joint and international responses," Watson said, "and National Security Adviser Jake Sullivan reinforced the United States' ironclad commitments to the defense of Japan and the ROK [South Korea]."

The last time a missile flew over Japan was in August 2017. This year alone, North Korea has shot 21 ballistic missiles and two cruise missiles.

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HEADLINE	10/03 Hurricane Ian death toll continues rising
SOURCE	https://abcnews.go.com/US/multiple-deaths-reported-hurricane-ian-slams-florida/story?id=90693636
GIST	<p>At least 99 people in Florida have died due to Hurricane Ian, according to local officials.</p> <p>Four additional people were also reported dead due to the storm in North Carolina, the governor's office said Saturday.</p> <p>The Category 4 storm slammed into Florida's southwest coast Wednesday afternoon, causing catastrophic damage, fierce winds and dangerous, record-breaking storm surges.</p> <p>Deaths from Hurricane Ian reported in Florida</p> <p>The deaths span multiple counties in Florida, including 54 in Lee County, 24 in Charlotte County, five in Volusia County, four in Collier County, three each in Sarasota and Manatee counties, two in Polk County, and one each in Hardee, Hillsborough, Lake and Hendry counties, ABC News has determined based on information from the Florida Medical Examiners Commission and inquiries with local officials and authorities.</p> <p>The death toll from the catastrophic storm has been rising amid ongoing search and rescue missions. Lee County Sheriff Carmine Marceno said that upward of 700 people were rescued in the devastated county.</p> <p>"It's what a heavy heart that I say that number," Marceno, whose county is home to hard-hit Fort Myers and the barrier island Sanibel, said in video posted to Facebook.</p> <p>The causes of the deaths in Florida were primarily drownings, as well as two vehicle accidents and a roofing accident, officials said.</p>

It is unclear whether the state's figure overlaps with ABC News' analysis. The state confirms deaths by reviewing medical examiner records, which can take some time.

Confirmed deaths from the Florida Department of Law Enforcement occurred in Lake, Sarasota, Manatee, Volusia and Collier counties between Sept. 27 and 30. The victims ranged in age from 22 to 91. One, a 68-year-old woman, drowned after being swept into the ocean by a wave on Sept. 29, the department said.

The Volusia County Sheriff's Office was among the first to publicly announce a fatality from Ian. A 72-year-old man in Deltona died after attempting to drain his pool during the storm, the office [said Thursday](#).

The man, who was not publicly identified, "disappeared" after heading outside, the sheriff's office said. Deputies found him unresponsive in a canal behind the home and he was pronounced dead at a local hospital, the sheriff's office said.

Deaths from Hurricane Ian reported in North Carolina

The storm made landfall again on Friday in South Carolina, which has reported no deaths due to the storm so far, Gov. Henry McMaster said Saturday.

Though in neighboring North Carolina, four storm-related deaths have been reported, Gov. Roy Cooper said in a statement Saturday. Three involved vehicle accidents on Friday, with the victims ranging in age from 22 to 25. Additionally, a 65-year-old man died Saturday from carbon monoxide poisoning after running a generator in his closed garage while the power was out.

Hurricane damage across the southeast, as rescue efforts continue

Florida Rep. Kathy Castor, who represents the Tampa Bay area, called the situation a "major catastrophe." "I'm afraid we're going to be dealing with a larger loss of life than we anticipated," she said on ["ABC News Live" Thursday](#).

Florida Sen. Rick Scott told "Good Morning America" Thursday morning there were "thousands of rescue efforts going on right now."

"We've got great sheriff's departments, police departments, fire departments, state rescue teams. They're working hard. But there's a lot of people that need help right now," he said.

He expressed concern for the state's many low-lying areas.

"The water kills and I'm just -- I'm scared to death of, you know, what's happened here and I hope everybody stays safe," he said.

Sheriff Marceno [told "Good Morning America" Thursday](#) they had thousands of 911 calls they were answering.

"We still cannot access many of the people that are in need," Marceno said. "It's a real, real rough road ahead."

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HEADLINE	10/03 US, Philippines forces hold combat drills
SOURCE	https://abcnews.go.com/US/wireStory/us-philippine-forces-hold-combat-drills-brace-crisis-90903304
GIST	<p>MANILA, Philippines -- More than 2,500 U.S. and Philippine marines joined combat exercises Monday to respond to any sudden crisis in a region long on tenterhooks over South China Sea territorial disputes and increasing tensions over Taiwan.</p> <p>The annual military drills are the first major exercise between the longtime treaty allies under newly elected Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos Jr., military officials said. His predecessor, Rodrigo</p>

Duterte, was an outspoken critic of U.S. security policies and frowned on military exercises with American forces he said could offend China.

Called Kamandag, the Tagalog acronym for “Cooperation of the Warriors of the Sea,” the drills involve 1,900 U.S. Marines and more than 600 mostly Philippine counterparts in mock amphibious assaults and special operations, U.S. and Philippine military officials said. America’s HIMARS missile launchers and supersonic fighter jets will take part in live-fire maneuvers that will end on Oct. 14, they said.

The venues include the western island province of Palawan, which faces the South China Sea, and the northern Philippines, across the Luzon Strait from Taiwan.

Philippine Rear Admiral Caesar Bernard Valencia said the exercises will focus on enhancing coastal defenses and are not directed against any country.

Japanese and South Korean forces will participate as observers but may join in disaster-response drills, he said.

The military maneuvers are being held simultaneously with combat exercises between U.S. Marines and Japanese army forces on Japan’s northern island of Hokkaido that involve about 3,000 military personnel from the two sides, U.S. military officials said.

U.S. Maj. Gen. Jay Barger on of the Japan-based 3rd Marine Division said the simultaneous exercises are aimed at bolstering the defensive capabilities of the U.S. alliances with the Philippines and Japan “through realistic combined training.”

“These exercises will allow our forces to strengthen interoperability and readiness to ensure we are prepared to rapidly respond to crisis throughout the Indo-Pacific,” Barger on said in a statement.

“Our strength, resolve and commitment to our allies and partners in the region are our most effective deterrent,” U.S. Marine Lt. Col. Kurt Stahl told The Associated Press. “Together, we can deter potential adversaries from ever testing our capabilities or our relationships.”

In July, U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken called on China to comply with a 2016 arbitration ruling that invalidated Beijing’s vast territorial claims in the South China Sea and warned that Washington is obligated to defend the Philippines under a 1951 U.S.-Philippines Mutual Defense Treaty if Filipino forces, vessels or aircraft come under attack in the disputed waters.

The ruling was issued by an arbitration tribunal set up in The Hague under the U.N. Convention on the Law of the Sea after the Philippine government complained in 2013 about China’s seizure of a shoal off its northwestern coast. China did not participate, called the arbitration decision a sham and continues to defy it.

In addition to China and the Philippines, Vietnam, Malaysia, Taiwan and Brunei have overlapping claims in the busy waterway, where an estimated \$5 trillion in goods passes each year and which is believed to be rich in undersea gas and oil deposits.

Separately, U.S. President Joe Biden said last month that American forces would defend Taiwan if Beijing tries to invade the self-ruled island, sparking protests from China.

The long-simmering sea disputes and the increasingly tense relations between China and Taiwan have become key fronts of the U.S.-China rivalry.

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HEADLINE	10/03 Calif. braces: dry winter, drought drags on
SOURCE	https://abcnews.go.com/US/wireStory/california-braces-dry-winter-western-drought-drags-90934145

SACRAMENTO, Calif. -- The past three years have been California's driest on record and state officials said Monday that they're preparing for the streak to continue.

The official water year concluded Friday, marking an end to a period that saw both record rainfall in October and the driest January-to-March period in at least a century. Scientists say such weather whiplash is likely to become more common as the planet warms. It will take more than a few winter storms to help the state dig out of drought.

Though its impossible to predict with certainty what the winter will bring, "we are actively planning for another dry year," said Jeanine Jones, drought manager for the state Department of Water Resources.

Jones spoke alongside state climatologist Michael Anderson about the just-completed water year. The water year runs from Oct. 1 to Sept. 30, so that the rainiest winter months are recorded together.

Snow that falls in California's mountains typically provides one-third of the state's annual water supply, but last year snow levels were far below average by the end of the winter. The Colorado River, another major source of water for Southern California, is also beset by drought, threatening its ability to supply farmers and cities around the U.S. West.

Precipitation was 76% of average for the year that just ended, and the state's reservoirs are at 69% of their historical levels, state officials said. The 2022 water year was slightly cooler and wetter than the year before, though not enough to change the trajectory of the drought, Anderson said.

Most of the state is in severe or extreme drought, according to the U.S. Drought Monitor. The worst conditions are throughout the Central Valley, the state's agricultural heartland where many of the nation's fruits, vegetables and nuts are grown.

Meanwhile, the weather phenomenon La Niña is expected to occur for a third straight year. Though the weather pattern was dry in previous years, its tricky to predict how it will affect California this year, Anderson said.

Another dry year would mean little to no water deliveries from state supplies to Southern California cities beyond what's needed for drinking and bathing. Farmers who rely on state and federal supplies would also see minimal water during another dry year, putting even greater strain on groundwater supplies often used as a backup to keep crops alive.

Farmers in the Sacramento Valley had a particularly rough water year, state officials said. About 600 square miles (1,554 square kilometers) of farmland, including a lot of rice fields, were fallowed in the valley this year, according to the Northern California Water Association and California Rice Commission.

Gov. Gavin Newsom, meanwhile, continues to urge California's 39 million residents to save water wherever possible by ripping out grass lawns or letting them go brown, taking shorter showers and generally being more conscious about water use. He called in summer 2021 for people to voluntarily cut their water use by 15% from 2020 levels, though the state is far from meeting that target.

Californians lowered their water use in August by 10.5%, water officials said Monday. But collectively, statewide water savings are down just 4% since Newsom made his request.

Though people who live in cities and rely on major water suppliers shouldn't be concerned about water reliability, water may start to cost more as suppliers build recycling plants or other new infrastructure to shore up supply, Jones said.

"We encourage people to learn and understand about where their community's water supply comes from and what's going to be needed to make it better in the future," she said.

	<p>There are signs that the state and its residents are better learning to deal with ongoing dry periods, said Jeff Mount, a senior fellow with the Water Policy Center at the Public Policy Institute of California.</p> <p>“We’re not fighting anymore about whether things are changing — we’re having reasonable fights about how to adapt to it,” Mount said.</p> <p>Looking to the future, state officials say they expect California's water supply to decline by 10% over the next two decades. Newsom in August touted recycling and desalination as ways to shore up the state's supply. Now, its time for the administration to turn that list of options into a clear set of priorities, Mount said.</p>
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HEADLINE	10/04 Report: fraud, scam cases rising on Zelle
SOURCE	https://www.seattletimes.com/business/fraud-scam-cases-increasing-on-zelle-senate-report-finds/
GIST	<p>NEW YORK (AP) — Incidents of fraud and scams are occurring more often on the popular peer-to-peer payment service Zelle, according to a report issued Monday by the office of Sen. Elizabeth Warren, giving the public its first glimpse into the growing problems at Zelle.</p> <p>The report also found that the large banks that partly own Zelle have been reluctant to compensate customers who have been victims of fraud or scams. For instance, less than half of the money customers reported being sent via Zelle without authorization was being reimbursed.</p> <p>Warren, D-Massachusetts, a long-time critic of the big banks, requested data on fraud and scams on Zelle from seven banks starting in April. The report cites data from four banks that tallied 192,878 cases worth collectively \$213.8 million in 2021 and the first half of 2022 where a customer claimed they had been fraudulently tricked into making a payment. In only roughly 3,500 cases did those banks reimburse the customer, the report found.</p> <p>Further, in the cases where it’s clear funds had been taken out of customers’ accounts without authorization, only 47% of those dollars were ever reimbursed.</p> <p>Since being launched in June 2017, Zelle has become a popular way for bank customers to send money to friends and family. Almost \$500 billion in funds were sent via Zelle in 2021, according to Early Warning Services, the company that operates Zelle.</p> <p>Zelle is the banking industry’s answer to the growing popularity of peer-to-peer payment services like PayPal, Venmo and the Cash App. The service allows a bank customer to instantaneously send money to a person via their email or phone number, and it will go from one bank account to another. More than 1,700 banks and credit unions offer the service. But the service has also grown more popular with scammers and criminals. Once money is sent via Zelle, it requires a bank’s intervention to attempt to get that money back.</p> <p>The cases of growing fraud and scams at Zelle have been highlighted in previous news reports, including two by The New York Times. But those stories cited mostly anecdotal evidence. Early Warning Services has previously said that 99.9% of all transactions happen without complaints of fraud or scams. A group of Democratic senators asked for usage data on Zelle after the reports in The New York Times.</p> <p>Banks are required under the Electronic Fund Transfer Act to repay customers when funds are illegally taken out of their account without authorization. Banks have argued that in cases of fraud — meaning a customer’s account becomes compromised somehow and they send an unauthorized payment — they do reimburse customers. Banks are more reluctant to reimburse customers who claim to have been scammed,</p>

arguing that customers would make such claims more often and it would be hard to tell whether the customer is telling the truth.

The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau has also been looking into Zelle and other payment platforms, and is expected to issue regulations that could require banks to reimburse customers for a wider array of scams and fraud.

The banking industry, aware of Washington's increased scrutiny of Zelle, has been on a campaign to show Zelle is a safe way to send money. The industry typically likes to point out that fraud and scam claims occur more often on the non-bank payment platforms like Venmo or the Cash App.

"That doesn't mean that Zelle, just like every other instant (peer-to-peer) payment service, is entirely free from those who seek to defraud the American consumer," four banking industry lobby groups said in a joint statement. "Banks know this and take steps to mitigate instances of fraud and criminal activity."

The data for individual banks shows the increase in fraud and scams. PNC Bank had 8,848 cases on Zelle in 2020, and is on pace to have roughly 12,300 cases this year. US Bank had 14,886 cases in 2020 and had 27,702 cases in 2021. Truist had 9,455 cases of fraud and scams on Zelle in 2020, which ballooned to 22,045 last year.

In response to Warren's report, Zelle's owner said the increased cases reflected the fact the service has become more popular.

"Zelle usage has grown significantly since its launch, from 247 million transactions in 2017 to 1.8 billion in 2021, while the proportion of fraud and scams has steadily decreased," Early Warning Services said in a statement.

Warren made fireworks at a congressional hearing last month involving most of the CEOs of the big Wall Street banks that use and partly own Zelle, where she pushed each of the CEOs to release fraud and scam incident data at their banks. The seven are: JPMorgan Chase, Wells Fargo, PNC Financial, Truist, Bank of America, Capital One and U.S. Bank.

The hearing featured an exchange where Jamie Dimon, the CEO of JPMorgan Chase, apologized to Warren for not getting her the data she requested and promised she would have it at the end of that day.

Warren's office says ultimately JPMorgan's data on Zelle did not provide the information they were looking for, so data from JPMorgan is not included in the report. JPMorgan did not return a request for comment.

Wells Fargo and Capitol one were also not included in the report. Wells said it sent its data to Warren's office on Sept. 28, a week after the congressional hearing.

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HEADLINE	10/03 Malware spreads in supply chain attack
SOURCE	https://thehackernews.com/2022/10/comm100-chat-provider-hijacked-to.html
GIST	<p>A threat actor likely with associations to China has been attributed to a new supply chain attack that involves the use of a trojanized installer for the Comm100 Live Chat application to distribute a JavaScript backdoor.</p> <p>Cybersecurity firm CrowdStrike said the attack made use of a signed Comm100 desktop agent app for Windows that was downloadable from the company's website.</p> <p>The scale of the attack is currently unknown, but the trojanized file is said to have been identified at organizations in the industrial, healthcare, technology, manufacturing, insurance, and telecom sectors in North America and Europe.</p>

Comm100 is a Canadian provider of live audio/video chat and customer engagement software for enterprises. It [claims](#) to have more than 15,000 customers across 51 countries.

"The installer was signed on September 26, 2022 at 14:54:00 UTC using a valid Comm100 Network Corporation certificate," the company [noted](#), adding it remained available until September 29.

Embedded within the weaponized executable is a JavaScript-based implant that executes a second-stage JavaScript code hosted on a remote server, which is designed to provide the actor with surreptitious remote shell functionality.

Also deployed as part of the post-exploitation activity is a malicious loader DLL named MidlRtMd.dll that launches an in-memory shellcode to inject an embedded payload into a new Notepad process.

Supply chain compromises, like that of [SolarWinds](#) and [Kaseya](#), are becoming an increasingly lucrative strategy for threat actors to target a widely-used software provider to gain a foothold in the networks of downstream customers.

As of writing, none of the security vendors [flag the installers](#) as malicious. Following responsible disclosure, the issue has since been addressed with the release of an [updated installer](#) (10.0.9).

CrowdStrike has tied the attack with moderate confidence to an actor with a China nexus based on the presence of Chinese-language comments in the malware and the targeting of online gambling entities in East and Southeast Asia, an already established area of interest for China-based intrusion actors.

That said, the payload delivered in this activity differs from other malware families previously identified as operated by the group, suggesting an expansion to its offensive arsenal.

As of writing, it's immediately not clear as to how the attackers managed to gain access to Comm100's internal systems and poison the legitimate installer.

The name of the adversary was not disclosed by CrowdStrike, but the TTPs point in the direction of a threat actor called [Earth Berberoka](#) (aka GamblingPuppet), which earlier this year was found using a fake chat app named [MiMi](#) in its attacks against the gambling industry.

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HEADLINE	10/04 Australia telecom Optus confirms data leak
SOURCE	https://thehackernews.com/2022/10/optus-hack-exposes-data-of-nearly-21.html
GIST	<p>Australian telecom giant Optus on Monday confirmed that nearly 2.1 million of its current and former customers suffered a leak of their personal information and at least one form of identification number as a result of a data breach late last month.</p> <p>The company also said it has engaged the services of Deloitte to conduct an external forensic assessment of the attack to "understand how it occurred and how we can prevent it from occurring again."</p> <p>Optus is fully owned by Singaporean telecommunications conglomerate Singtel, which also has a significant stake in Bharti Airtel, the second largest carrier in India.</p> <p>"Approximately 1.2 million customers have had at least one number from a current and valid form of identification, and personal information, compromised," Singtel said in an announcement made on its website.</p> <p>It also said the breach affected expired IDs and personal information of about 900,000 customers. It further emphasized that the exposed data did not contain valid or current document ID numbers for some 7.7 million customers.</p>

The leaked data is said to contain email addresses, phone numbers, and dates of births, necessitating that customers remain cautious about potential phishing and smishing attacks.

The company also said it has notified users whose current identification documents had been compromised in the attack. This includes driver license numbers, card numbers, and [Medicare ID numbers](#).

Of the 9.8 million customer records exposed, 14,900 valid Medicare IDs and 22,000 expired Medicare card numbers are estimated to have been exposed, Optus previously disclosed on September 28.

The security incident, which came to light on September 22, involved a malicious actor gaining unauthorized access to customer information. It's not immediately clear how and when the actual intrusion took place.

The attacker, using the alias "optusdata," subsequently published a small sample of the stolen data belonging to 10,200 users and demanded that Optus pay a \$1 million ransom to avoid more leaks.

The self-identified hacker has since withdrawn the extortion demand while apologizing for the crime and claiming that the "only copy" of stolen data had been destroyed, citing increased public attention.

While it's not known if "optusdata" is the person/group responsible for the breach, the Australian Federal Police (AFP) has launched twin operations to [identify the perpetrators](#) behind the attack and "supercharge the protection" of the 10,200 customers.

The latter, called Operation Guardian, offers "multi-jurisdictional and multi-layered protection from identity crime and financial fraud," with the agency stating the impacted users had 100 points of identification released online.

"There are reports that sophisticated scammers are contacting Optus customers via phone, email, and text to get further personal information from the victims of the breach," the AFP [warned](#) last week.

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HEADLINE	10/04 ProxyNotShell-new Proxy hell?
SOURCE	https://thehackernews.com/2022/10/proxynotshell-new-proxy-hell.html
GIST	<p>Nicknamed ProxyNotShell, a new exploit used in the wild takes advantage of the recently published Microsoft Server-Side Request Forgery (SSRF) vulnerability CVE-2022-41040 and a second vulnerability, CVE-2022-41082 that allows Remote Code Execution (RCE) when PowerShell is available to unidentified attackers.</p> <p>Based on ProxyShell, this new zero-day abuse risk leverage a chained attack similar to the one used in the 2021 ProxyShell attack that exploited the combination of multiple vulnerabilities - CVE-2021-34523, CVE-2021-34473, and CVE-2021-31207 – to permit a remote actor to execute arbitrary code.</p> <p>Despite the potential severity of attacks using them, ProxyShell vulnerabilities are still on CISA's list of top 2021 routinely exploited vulnerabilities.</p> <p>Meet ProxyNotShell</p> <p>Recorded on September 19, 2022, CVE-2022-41082 is an attack vector targeting Microsoft's Exchange Servers, enabling attacks of low complexity with low privileges required. Impacted services, if vulnerable, enable an authenticated attacker to compromise the underlying exchange server by leveraging existing exchange PowerShell, which could result in a full compromise.</p> <p>With the help of CVE-2022-41040, another Microsoft vulnerability also recorded on September 19, 2022, an attacker can remotely trigger CVE-2022-41082 to remotely execute commands.</p>

Though a user needs to have the privilege to access CVE-2022-41040, which should curtail the vulnerability accessibility to attackers, the required level of privilege is low.

At the time of writing, Microsoft has not yet issued a patch but recommends that users [add a blocking rule](#) as a mitigation measure.

Both vulnerabilities were uncovered during an active attack against GTSC, a Vietnamese organization called GTSC, granting attackers access to some of their clients. Though neither vulnerability on its own is particularly dangerous, exploits chaining them together could potentially lead to catastrophic breaches.

The chained vulnerabilities could grant an outsider attacker the ability to read emails directly off an organization's server the ability to breach the organization with CVE-2022-41040 Remote Code Execution and implant malware on the organization's Exchange Server with CVE-2022-41082.

Though it appears that attackers would need some level of authentication to activate the chained vulnerabilities exploit, the exact level of authentication required – rated "Low" by Microsoft – is not yet clarified. Yet, this required low authentication level should effectively prevent a massive, automated attack targeting every Exchange server around the globe. This hopefully will prevent a replay of the 2021 ProxyShell debacle.

Yet, finding a single valid email address/password combination on a given Exchange server should not be overly difficult, and, as this attack bypasses MFA or FIDO token validation to log into Outlook Web Access, a single compromised email address/password combination is all that is needed.

Mitigating ProxyNotShell Exposure

At the time of writing, Microsoft has not yet issued a patch but recommends that users [add a blocking rule](#) as a mitigation measure of unknown efficacy.

Blocking incoming traffic to Exchange Servers holding critical asserts is also an option, though only practicable if such a measure does not impact vital operations and should ideally be perceived as a temporary measure pending Microsoft's issuance of a verified patch.

Assessing ProxyNotShell Exposure

As the current mitigation options are either of unverified efficacy or potentially damaging to the smooth running of operations, evaluating the degree of exposure to ProxyNotShell might prevent taking potentially disruptive unnecessary preventative measures, or indicate which assets to preemptively migrate to unexposed servers.

Cymulate Research Lab has developed a [custom-made assessment for ProxyNotShell](#) that enable organizations to estimate exactly their degree of exposure to ProxyNotShell.

A ProxyNotShell attack vector has been added to the advanced scenarios templates, and running it on your environment yields the necessary information to validate exposure – or lack thereof - to ProxyNotShell.

Until verified patches are available from Microsoft, assessing exposure to ProxyNotShell to evaluate exactly which servers are potential targets is the most cost-efficient way to evaluate exactly which assets are exposed and devise targeted preemptive measures with maximum impact.

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HEADLINE	10/03 Phishing targets KFC, McDonald's overseas
SOURCE	https://www.infosecurity-magazine.com/news/kfc-and-mcdonalds-targeted/
GIST	KFC and McDonald's customers were targeted via phishing campaigns across Saudi Arabia, UAE and Singapore, with payment details of some of them successfully stolen by attackers.

Spotted by security researchers at [CloudSEK](#), the first of these campaigns worked via a domain impersonating the Google Play Store and displaying a malicious, browser-based application for Chrome.

Upon landing on the malicious URL and clicking on the download button, the text on the button changes to 'Install,' which in turn prompts the user to install the browser application 'KFC Saudi Arabia 4+.'

"After installation, a desktop shortcut for the same application is created on the user's desktop," CloudSEK wrote in an advisory published over the weekend.

"Double-Clicking the KFC Saudi Arabia 4+ app opens a chrome application window, which loads the site [...], which seems to be down at the time of analysis."

Further, the team also discovered a second website pointing to KFC-focused phishing.

"This site is a sophisticated and elaborate phishing campaign being used to steal the card details of the victims," CloudSEK wrote.

"When the victim tries to place an order on the phishing site, they are presented with a pop-up window to fill in their details in the form."

According to the advisory, the form was well-designed, providing users with suggestions while filling up their addresses using the Google Maps API. Further, the site only accepted payment card details that satisfied the [Luhn algorithm](#) to ensure that the cards being submitted were valid.

"After submitting the card details, the victim was prompted to provide the One Time Password (OTP) received on SMS," reads the CloudSEK technical write-up.

"After entering the OTP, the victim is taken to another website impersonating McDonald's, [...] At the time of writing, the site was inactive."

Using Passive DNS and reverse IP lookups, CloudSEK's researchers discovered additional domains hosted on the servers used by the site impersonating KFC and McDonald's.

"Users should be vigilant while visiting sites and submitting their PII and banking information," CloudSEK warned.

The [advisory](#) also suggests companies identify and report domains impersonating brand names and trademarks and create inclusive awareness campaigns to educate customers about the organization's processes.

More generally, threat actors are constantly evolving tactics, and that goes for phishing attempts as well. For instance, security researchers at Proofpoint have recently spotted [phishing campaigns using Microsoft Sway](#).

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HEADLINE	10/04 Russian hackers aim at Kremlin targets
SOURCE	https://www.infosecurity-magazine.com/news/russian-hackers-take-aim-at/
GIST	<p>Russian threat actors have begun launching cyber-attacks at targets inside their country, in retaliation for what they see as a needless war with Ukraine, according to a new report.</p> <p>The Kyiv Post claimed to have spoken to members of the National Republican Army (NRA), a Russian hacking outfit working towards the overthrow of the Putin regime.</p> <p>Their first target was Unisoftware, a Russian software developer that reportedly works closely with government clients.</p>

The group claimed to have stolen all data held by the firm, including: banking and personal account credentials, employee information, phone numbers, addresses, contracts, and proprietary code for Unisoftware clients and software.

Among the trove was apparently data from several Russian clients. The paper confirmed the authenticity of this after reviewing materials shared by the NRA.

“It’s funny because they tried to kick us out and fix the machines,” an NRA member reportedly told the *Kyiv Post*.

“They don’t understand that we are still there, and have been there for months, and will continue to terrorize them for helping maintain the Putin regime.”

The group also claimed to have compromised other clients, although details of these couldn’t be verified in the report.

However, one potential target could have been Russian IT retail giant DNS, [which admitted in a brief statement](#) earlier this week that it had been breached.

It revealed that although passwords and bank card data was safe, an unspecified volume of personal information on customers and employees had been compromised.

“We see that the attack was carried out by a group of hackers. Hacking was carried out from servers located outside the Russian Federation,” it said.

“We have already found gaps in the protection of our information infrastructure and are working to strengthen information security in the company.”

Cyber-attacks have been a key tactic for both Ukraine and Russia over recent months. Ukraine reached out to the global community to help it create an “IT army” to [DDoS key Russian sites](#), while Russian state hackers [have launched hundreds](#) of separate destructive and information ops campaigns against Kyiv.

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HEADLINE	10/03 Scammers impersonate cyber researchers
SOURCE	https://www.bleepingcomputer.com/news/security/fake-microsoft-exchange-proxynotshell-exploits-for-sale-on-github/
GIST	<p>Scammers are impersonating security researchers to sell fake proof-of-concept ProxyNotShell exploits for newly discovered Microsoft Exchange zero-day vulnerabilities.</p> <p>Last week, Vietnamese cybersecurity firm GTSC disclosed that some of their customers had been attacked using two new zero-day vulnerabilities in Microsoft Exchange.</p> <p>Working with Trend Micro's Zero Day Initiative, the researchers disclosed the vulnerabilities privately to Microsoft, who confirmed that the bugs were being exploited in attacks and that they were working on an accelerated timeline to release security updates.</p> <p>"Microsoft observed these attacks in fewer than 10 organizations globally. MSTIC assesses with medium confidence that the single activity group is likely to be a state-sponsored organization," Microsoft shared in an analysis of the attacks.</p> <p>Security researchers are keeping the technical details of the vulnerabilities private, and it appears only a small number of threat actors are exploiting them.</p>

Due to this, other researchers and threat actors are awaiting the first public disclosure of the vulnerabilities to use in their own activities, whether defending a network or hacking into one.

Scammers selling fake exploits

To take advantage of this lull before the storm, a scammer has begun creating GitHub repositories where they attempt to sell fake proof-of-concept exploits for the Exchange CVE-2022-41040 and CVE-2022-41082 vulnerabilities.

Huntress Lab's John Hammond has [been following these scammers](#), finding five now-removed accounts attempting to sell the phony exploits. These accounts were under the names 'jml4da', 'TimWallbey', 'Liu Zhao Khin (0daylabin)', 'R007er', and 'spher0x.'

Another scam account [found by Paulo Pacheco](#) impersonated Kevin Beaumont (aka [GossTheDog](#)), a well-known security researcher/professional who has been documenting the new Exchange vulnerabilities and available mitigations.

The repositories themselves don't contain anything of importance, but the README.md describes what is currently known about the new vulnerabilities, followed by a pitch on how they are selling one copy of a PoC exploit for the zero days.

"This means it can go unnoticed by the user and potentially by the security team as well. Such a powerful tool should not be fully public, there is strictly only 1 copy available so a REAL researcher can use it: <https://satoshidisk.com/pay/xxx>," reads the text in the scam repository.

The README files contain a link for a SatoshiDisk page where the scammer is attempting to sell the fake exploit for 0.01825265 Bitcoin, worth approximately \$420.00.

These vulnerabilities are worth far more than \$400, with [Zerodium offering at least \\$250,000](#) for Microsoft Exchange remote code execution zero days.

It should go without saying that this is just a scam, and sending any bitcoin will likely not result in you receiving anything.

Furthermore, with all the information already available, figuring out an exploit for the bugs is likely not going to be too difficult, [especially for more advanced threat actors](#), such as state-sponsored hackers who would have an incentive to breach organizations of interest.

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HEADLINE	10/03 Bumblebee malware loader payloads vary
SOURCE	https://www.darkreading.com/attacks-breaches/bumblebee-malware-loader-s-payloads-significantly-vary-by-victim-system
GIST	<p>A new analysis of Bumblebee, a particularly pernicious malware loader that first surfaced this March, shows that its payload for systems that are part of an enterprise network is very different from its payload for standalone systems.</p> <p>On systems that appear to be part of a domain — for example, systems that might share the same Active Directory server — the malware is programmed to drop sophisticated post-exploitation tools such as Cobalt Strike. On the other hand, when Bumblebee determines it has landed on a machine that is part of a workgroup — or peer-to-peer LAN — the payload generally tends to be banking and information stealers.</p> <p>Different Malware</p> <p>"While the victim's geographical location didn't seem to have any effect on the malware behavior, we observed a very stark difference between the way Bumblebee behaves after infecting machines," Check Point said in a report this week based on a recent analysis of the malware.</p>

"If the victim is connected to WORKGROUP, in most cases it receives the DEX command (Download and Execute), which causes it to drop and run a file from the disk," Check Point said. However, if the system is connected to an AD domain, the malware uses Download and Inject (DIJ) or Download shellcode and Inject (SHI) commands to download advanced payloads such as Cobalt, Strike, Meterpreter, and Silver.

Check Point's analysis adds to the growing volume of research around Bumblebee in the six months or so since researchers first observed the malware in the wild. The malware has garnered attention for several reasons. One of them is its relatively widespread use among multiple threat groups. In an April 2022 analysis, researchers from Proofpoint said they had observed at least [three distinct threat groups](#) distributing Bumblebee to deliver different second-stage payloads on infected systems, including ransomware such as Conti and Diavol. Google's threat analysis group identified one of the actors distributing Bumblebee as an [initial access broker](#) they are tracking as "Exotic Lily."

Proofpoint and other security researchers have described Bumblebee as being used by threat actors previously associated with BazaLoader, a prolific malware loader that among other things [masqueraded as a movie-streaming service](#), but which disappeared from the scene in February 2022.

A Sophisticated and Constantly Evolving Threat

Another reason for the attention that Bumblebee has attracted is what security researchers have said is its sophistication. They have pointed to its anti-virtualization and anti-sandbox checks, its encrypted network communications, and its ability to check running processes for signs of malware analysis activity. Unlike many other malware tools, the authors of Bumblebee have also used a custom packer to pack or mask the malware when distributing it, Check Point said.

Threat actors have used different tactics to deliver Bumblebee. The most common has been to embed the DLL-like binary inside an ISO or VHD — or disk image — files and deliver it via a phishing or spear-phishing email. The malware is an example of how threat actors have [started using container files to deliver malware](#) now that Microsoft has disabled Office Macros — their previous favorite infection vector — from running by default on Windows systems.

Bumblebee's constant evolution has been another point of concern. In its report this week, Check Point noted how the malware has been in "constant evolution" over the past several months. As an example, the security vendor pointed to how its authors briefly switched from using ISO files to VHD format files with a PowerShell script before switching back to ISO. Similarly, until early July, Bumblebee's command and control servers only accepted only one infected victim from that same victim IP address. "This means that if several computers in an organization accessing the internet with the same public IP were infected, the C2 server will only accept the first one infected," Check Point said.

However, the authors of the malware recently turned that feature off, meaning Bumblebee's C2 servers can now communicate with multiple infected systems on the same network. Check Point theorized the malware's authors were initially just testing the malware and have now moved past that stage.

Check Point and other vendors such as Proofpoint have made indicators of compromise available for Bumblebee to help organizations detect and block the threat in their environment.

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HEADLINE	10/03 Russia retail chain 'DNS' confirms hack
SOURCE	https://www.bleepingcomputer.com/news/security/russian-retail-chain-dns-confirms-hack-after-data-leaked-online/?&web_view=true
GIST	<p>Russian retail chain 'DNS' (Digital Network System) disclosed yesterday that they suffered a data breach that exposed the personal information of customers and employees.</p> <p>DNS is Russia's second-largest computer and home appliance store chain, with 2,000 branches and 35,000 employees.</p>

According to the scant details provided in the announcement, a group of hackers residing outside the Russian Federation exploited a security gap in the company's IT systems and accessed customer and employee details.

"We have already found gaps in the protection of our information infrastructure and are working to strengthen information security in the company," says the [DNS announcement](#).

While the firm has not provided details on what information was compromised, it clarified that the hackers didn't steal user passwords and payment card data, as that data isn't stored on their systems.

DNS data leaked on hacker forum

DNS' disclosure of a security breach comes hours after a threat actor began leaking the company's data on a hacking forum, allegedly stolen by a hacking group known as 'NLB Team.'

The data was allegedly stolen on September 19 and contains full names, usernames, email addresses, and phone numbers of DNS customers and employees for 16 million people.

According to SimilarWeb data, DNS-shop.ru receives approximately 81.3 million visits per month, being in the top 30 most visited sites in the country, so the alleged number of impacted individuals seems plausible.

Neither the volume of the stolen data nor the type of the information has been officially confirmed.

It is worth noting that the same person leaking DNS' data had previously offered databases belonging to other Russian organizations, "Cherlock.ru," a legal information portal, and "CDEK.market," a consumer goods e-commerce platform.

Russian sites facing “insider” threats

The attack against DNS is allegedly the work of pro-Ukrainian hackers, but new reports have surfaced over the weekend that put a new threat in the frame for Russian sites.

Kyiv Post reports that hackers affiliated with the so-called "National Republican Army" (NRA), an organization uniting dissidents seeking to overthrow Putin, are launching attacks against key Russian firms.

Their first high-profile victim is allegedly "Unisoftware," a software development firm that works closely with the Russian government, the Central Bank, and the federal tax service.

Reportedly, the attack involved the deployment of a ransomware strain to cause damage, while the group also shared some screenshots with the publication as evidence of their access.

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HEADLINE	10/03 Ransomware causing chaos in schools
SOURCE	https://www.vice.com/en/article/88qvmx/how-ransomware-is-causing-chaos-in-american-schools
GIST	<p>May 19, 2021 was supposed to be just another day at the end of the school year at Sierra College, a community college in Rocklin, California. Instead, hackers hit the school with ransomware, throwing it into chaos.</p> <p>“We are experiencing a major cybersecurity event this morning that is impacting the majority of services at Sierra College,” Tom Benton, the school’s chief technology officer, wrote in an email to all staff, which Motherboard obtained through a Freedom of Information request. “Several people are reporting ransomware screens on their computer screens to encrypt data. If the message is seen on a computer screen please unplug the computer from the network and do not use the system until further notice.”</p> <p>Sierra College was just one of 1,043 schools and colleges—part of 62 school districts and the campuses of 26 colleges and universities—hit by ransomware hackers in 2021, according to Emsisoft, a cybersecurity</p>

company that tracks ransomware incidents. The company reports that, so far in 2022, there have been 27 districts with 1,735 schools hit with ransomware.

“Attacks on schools are commonplace for one very simple reason: they’re profitable. Like legitimate businesses, when cybercriminal enterprises hit on a strategy that works well, they’ll repeat it over and over,” Brett Callow, a security researcher at Emsisoft, told Motherboard. “The only way to stop attacks on the education sector is to make them unprofitable, and a big part of that requires bolstering security in schools so that they don’t need to pay.”

Vice Society (no relation to VICE Media), a notorious ransomware gang, has taken credit for nine ransomware hacks against U.S. schools this year, including one earlier this month that hit [Los Angeles Unified School District](#), the second largest district in the United States. The hackers are threatening to release files related to the hack at the end of this week.

Sierra College holds the dubious honor of having been on both years’ lists. In August of this year, two days before the beginning of the fall semester, the college [was hit by another ransomware attack](#), though this one had a limited impact, and just two days later [most systems were back up online](#).

Motherboard filed Freedom of Information requests with 52 public schools, school districts, and colleges for emails and communications related to the ransomware attacks. The documents obtained give an insight into how schools dealt with these incidents: alert staff, put a stop to classes, engage forensic and legal services, sometimes suspend computer and internet access, and attempt to restore normalcy as soon as possible.

[It took more than two weeks](#) for Sierra College to clean up the damage and have most of its systems back up and running. In the meantime, school officials sent regular emails updating staff about the progress in remediating the attack.

“Every Sierra College employee and student will be asked to play an important role by resetting their password once systems become available,” read another email from Benton.

Instead of paying the ransom, the school decided to replace the encrypted hard drives, ordering 300 new hard drives for a total of \$18,667.94, according to the emails.

Corry Area School District in northwestern Pennsylvania had to make the same decision, as “the district IT staff along with the local police and an outside agency investigated the issue and concluded that the data is not restorable from the servers,” according to emails obtained by Motherboard. “This means that there will be no computer or network access available until further notice.”

The aftermath of the hack at Sierra College was chaotic.

“I’m doing a presentation on the Chancellor’s Office webinar this morning. Hopefully it doesn’t pop up on my screen! Lol,” Willy Duncan, the president of Sierra College, wrote to Benton on the day of the hack, referring to the ransomware request screen. “Scary stuff, it’s been happening so often lately across so many businesses.”

Two days later, a student emailed Benton asking for help after their computer started “acting funny” and they couldn’t log into his college account.

Benton emailed a colleague asking her to follow up with the student and “confirm the current cybersecurity issue we are experiencing is not transmitted to other computers unless they are District computers on our network and on campus.”

“The last thing we need is people to start blaming their personal PC issues on our cyber attack,” Benton wrote.

A couple of weeks after the attack, John Deaderick, a professor, emailed Benton saying he was able to update his password without having to use two-factor authentication.

“I’m interested in understanding how you were able to reset your password without having a device available to get the pin # required to reset your password,” Benton responded.

“Thank you Tom. If I could remember how I reset my password, I’d tell you,” Deaderick said.

“Lol! Fair enough,” Benton quipped back.

Ironically, the hack on Sierra College happened just a couple of weeks after Benton emailed a listserv of chief information security officers working in the education sector, asking if anyone had recommendations for mandatory cybersecurity courses for staffers.

How the Cloud Can Stop Ransomware

The ransomware attacks did not impact all schools the same way. For example, when hackers [infected the systems of Victor Central School District in New York](#), they did force the school to close, but several of the school’s systems were not impacted because they were hosted on cloud-based systems, and other systems were backed up and so relatively easy to restore, according to internal emails.

Still, after the attack, Kelli Eckdahl, the director of the school’s educational technology wrote in an email that the “District is completely disconnected from the Internet, cannot bring back up until it’s clean and state says ok (they will ask us), we have to do things in a certain order to ensure it’s clean.”

“At this point, any machine that connects to district network will become infected - we have disconnected all machines in district to prevent any additional spread,” Eckdahl wrote. “Everything has been disconnected to the network and will need to be wiped out and reinstalled upon verification of clean data.”

Relying on cloud services, or using Chromebooks that are essentially machines that only run a browser, are ways schools can avoid severe damage when hackers hit. Another is to have backups that are on a separate network, meaning they don’t get hit when ransomware infects the other machines. [That’s what happened to Affton High School in Missouri](#), which didn’t even have to consider paying hackers given that their backups were not impacted by the ransomware.

Requests Denied

Unlike Sierra College, Victor Central School District, and the Corry Area School District, some other public schools denied Motherboard’s FOIA requests.

Some, like Logansport Community School in Indiana, and Mesquite Independent School District in Texas argued that “all of the information at issue consists of information that was created to mitigate a cybersecurity incident. Release of the information could and would afford future threat actors the means by which to mount future ransomware attacks against the District and will subject the District to further scrutiny and potential targeting by threat actors and as such is not subject to disclosure.”

A representative of the Hazleton Area School District in Pennsylvania denied the FOIA request citing a part of the state’s Right To Know Act that excludes some documents from disclosure such as “documents or data relating to computer hardware, source files, software and system networks that could jeopardize computer security by exposing a vulnerability in preventing, protecting against, mitigating or responding to a terrorist attack.”

Another school district, the Manhasset Union Free School District, denied the request to release documents alleging that the documents are exempt because “disclosure would interfere with law enforcement investigations.”

Several others, such as Allen Independent School District in Texas, the Union School District in Iowa, and Whitehouse Independent School District, in Texas argued that they couldn’t release the documents

because all communications about the incident were protected by attorney-client confidentiality given that the school cc'ed a legal firm in emails about the ransomware attack.

These denials leave a gap in transparency and the public's understanding of the way schools have had to deal with ransomware attacks.

Adam Marshall, the senior staff attorney at the Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press, and an expert in FOIA requests, said that this is a common practice that can be legitimate, but it has also been abused so that government entities "can later argue that those communications are privileged."

"Simply copying a law firm on emails is not enough as a general matter to establish the attorney-client privilege," Marshall told Motherboard in a phone call, explaining that the communications that could be protected can only be those related to "obtaining legal advice or legal services."

Knowing how ransomware is hitting and affecting schools "is immensely important for the public to know more about, for the parents in these jurisdictions to know more about, for the students in these jurisdictions to know more about," Marshall said. "The public should be able to know what is happening in these schools and how it's affecting them."

Moreover, Marshall added, even if the communications are indeed protected by attorney-client privilege, the government organization involved can still decide to disclose and publish the relevant documents, it is at the discretion of these entities.

In the case of Sierra College, the school did not claim this privilege, and released several emails that detail how the school dealt with the ransomware attack that almost paralyzed it for days.

Roughly two weeks after getting hit by ransomware, Sierra College came back online.

"This week we restored most of our systems and are getting back to our focus on teaching and learning," the school wrote in a statement. "This was an attack directed at our networks and impacted several servers as well as hundreds of desktop computers. As part of the attack, some information was encrypted by malicious software, malware, that limited our access to important information. Through multiple processes we now have access to most of that information and have been able to bring most services back online."

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HEADLINE	10/03 WA teens fall victim online scams faster
SOURCE	https://komonews.com/news/local/study-washington-teens-falling-victim-to-online-scams-faster-than-seniors-social-catfish-fbi#
GIST	<p>With teens back in school, experts say parents and teachers should talk to them about online safety. A new study found tech-savvy teens in Washington are falling for online scams at a higher rate than seniors.</p> <p>According to Social Catfish, a company dedicated to preventing online scams through reverse search technology, the money lost by victims under 20 years old grew by 1125% over the last five years compared to 390% for seniors. Teens lost just \$8.2 million in 2017 compared to \$101.4 million last year.</p> <p>The company's founder, David McClellan, says teens are becoming overconfident because of their experience with social media apps, like TikTok or Instagram.</p> <p>"They are overconfident when they're online on social media talking to people, and they actually invite conversations from people they don't know because [they may believe] it's the cool thing to be a TikToker, it's a cool thing to be an influencer right?" said McClellan.</p> <p>Their study shows that 'Sextortion' is one of the most common scams targeting teens. The FBI announced a dramatic increase in 'Sextortion' plots against teenage boys. Scammers pose as attractive females on</p>

	<p>social media, send nude photos, and ask for the same in return. Once received, the victim is told if he does not send money, the photo will be sent to all his friends and family and posted online.</p> <p>McClellan says the best way to avoid this is to perform a reverse image search to confirm the person you're chatting with online is who they say they are.</p> <p>Scammers are also playing with student loans since the government announced up to \$20,000 in student loans can be forgiven this Fall. Fake websites with imposter Department of Education logos are tricking people into providing their bank and personal information in hopes of having their debt forgiven.</p> <p>"Just take that website and Google "blank" website scams and you can look and see if anybody has reported it as a scam, and always read the reviews to make sure they're legitimate," said McClellan.</p> <p>Similarly, scammers are asking teenage gamers to send their bank info to make in-game purchases that'll help them win.</p> <p>Talent scout scams are on the rise too. Users on Instagram and TikTok receive DM's offering modeling and acting opportunities. McClellan says never give out your personal information.</p> <p>"It's not just identity theft, we're seeing scammers steal people's information to open up cryptocurrency accounts and bank accounts," he said.</p> <p>Social Catfish says seniors remain by far the most victimized group overall, losing \$1.68 billion last year but the surge of Gen Z victims is alarming and speaks to the growing sophistication of scammers.</p>
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HEADLINE	10/03 IT 'incident' disrupts local health system
SOURCE	https://www.thenewstribune.com/news/local/article266773316.html
GIST	<p>Computer security issues affecting a local health system led to some rescheduled patient appointments and patients being unable to access records online Monday.</p> <p>Virginia Mason Franciscan Health sent a statement to The News Tribune after reports of patient portals and computer systems being down, affecting workers and patients at different sites. VMFH operates hospitals and clinics around the region, including St. Joseph Medical Center in Tacoma.</p> <p>The statement said: "Virginia Mason Franciscan Health's parent company CommonSpirit Health is managing an IT security incident which is impacting some of our facilities."</p> <p>It added, "As a precautionary step, we have taken certain IT systems offline, which may include electronic health record systems and other systems."</p> <p>VMFH said its facilities were following "existing protocols for system outages and taking steps to minimize the disruption."</p> <p>The incident led to some patient appointments being rescheduled, it noted. Patients also were unable to access their MyChart accounts, which is the online patient portal for medical records, messaging, test results, billing and more.</p> <p>Meanwhile, reports of the outage from other parts of the country indicated it was more of a widespread event beyond the Puget Sound region.</p> <p>Media in Tennessee, North Dakota and Nebraska reported systems taken down in similar fashion at CHI hospitals in those locations under the CommonSpirit Health umbrella.</p>
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HEADLINE	10/03 Albania denies police system hacked
SOURCE	https://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/albania-denies-police-system-attacked-iranian-hackers-90931329
GIST	<p>TIRANA, Albania -- Albanian authorities on Monday denied the country's police system was hacked after local media reported that data on people being investigated for crimes was released from an Iranian hacking group.</p> <p>Albanian media reported a leaked file with a list of suspected people, from allegedly the police database, who are being probed on different crimes.</p> <p>Ervin Karamuco, a criminology professor, was quoted in social media as saying a channel called Homeland Justice had published 1.7 gigabytes of criminal data from the Memex police system.</p> <p>State police denied its Memex system was damaged but urged local media not to publish data from hackers.</p> <p>Interior Minister Bledi Cuci said that list had not come from the criminal police database. He said Microsoft and the FBI were helping Albanian authorities recuperate the affected systems.</p> <p>Speaking at the Parliament, Prime Minister Edi Rama said the list aimed at creating social disturbances by issuing a “photo-edited list mixing criminals with politicians, with journalists.”</p> <p>Last month Albania cut diplomatic ties with Iran over a July 15 cyberattack that temporarily shut down numerous Albanian government digital services and websites. Rama called the disruption an act of “state aggression.”</p> <p>After Tirana severed ties with Tehran, a second cyberattack from the same Iranian source struck an information system that records Albanian border entries and exits, creating delays for travelers.</p> <p>NATO, the United States and the European Union denounced the attack and supported Albania’s move to cut diplomatic ties with Tehran. The U.S. government imposed sanctions on Iran’s intelligence agency and its leadership in response to the July cyberattack.</p> <p>Albania, a NATO member, is being helped by the alliance, the U.S. and the EU to investigate and install better cyberdefenses.</p>
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HEADLINE	10/03 Mexico still using spyware on activists?
SOURCE	https://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/report-mexico-continued-spyware-activists-90923187
GIST	<p>MEXICO CITY -- The Mexican government or army has allegedly continued to use spyware designed to hack into the cellphones of activists, despite a pledge by President Andrés Manuel López Obrador to end such practices.</p> <p>Press freedom groups said Monday they found evidence of recent attempts to use the Israeli spyware program Pegasus against activists investigating human rights abuses by the Mexican army. The Pegasus infection was confirmed through a forensic investigation by the University of Toronto group Citizen Lab.</p> <p>According to a report by the press freedom group Article 19, The Network for the Defense of Digital Rights and Mexican media organizations, the targets included rights activist Raymundo Ramos.</p> <p>Ramos has worked for years documenting military and police abuses, including multiple killings, in the drug cartel-dominated border city of Nuevo Laredo. Ramos’ cellphone was apparently infected with Pegasus spyware in 2020.</p>

“They do not like us documenting these types of cases, for them to be made public and have criminal complaints filed,” Ramos said.

The other victims included journalist and author Ricardo Raphael in 2019 and 2020, and an unnamed journalist for the online media outlet Animal Politico.

Daniel Moreno, the director of Animal Politico, said “if the president didn’t know, that is very serious because it means the army engaged in spying without his consent. If the president did know, that is also very serious.”

López Obrador took office in December 2018 pledging to end government spying. The president said he himself had been the victim of government surveillance for decades as an opposition leader.

“We are not involved in that,” Lopez Obrador said in 2019, in response to questions about the use of Pegasus. “Here we have decided not to go after anybody. Before, when we were in the opposition, we were spied on.”

The report Monday alleged the Mexican army has requested price quotes for surveillance programs from companies connected to the distribution of Pegasus, which the company says is sold only to governments.

The report said the hacker group Guacamaya found army documents listing requests for price quotes from 2020, 2021 and 2022.

The victims of the spyware attacks said they assumed the military was responsible, because of the nature of their work and the timing of the espionage.

Leopoldo Maldonado, the director of Article 19, said, “All of this indicates two possible scenarios: the first, that the president lied to the people of Mexico. The second is that the armed forces are spying behind the president’s back, disobeying the orders of their commander in chief.”

Contacted for comment, a spokesman for Mexico’s Defense Department said it had no immediate comment on the allegations.

In 2021, a Mexican businessman was arrested on charges he used the Pegasus spyware to spy on a journalist, but the Israeli spyware firm NSO Group distanced itself from that man. The businessman has long been described in Mexico as an employee of a firm that acted as an intermediary in the spyware purchases.

López Obrador’s top security official has said that two previous administrations spent \$61 million to buy Pegasus spyware.

The NSO Group has been implicated in government surveillance of opponents and journalists around the world. The company said “NSO’s technologies are only sold to vetted and approved government entities.”

Mexico had the largest list — about 15,000 phone numbers — among more than 50,000 reportedly selected by NSO clients for potential surveillance.

López Obrador has relied more on the military and given it more responsibilities — from building infrastructure projects to overseeing seaports and airports — than any of his predecessors.

That has raised concerns that the Mexican army — which has traditionally stayed out of politics — may be turning into a force unto itself, with little oversight or transparency.

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HEADLINE	10/02 October: cybersecurity awareness month
SOURCE	https://www.cisa.gov/cybersecurity-awareness-month

GIST	<p>Since 2004, the President of the United States and Congress have declared October to be Cybersecurity Awareness Month, helping individuals protect themselves online as threats to technology and confidential data become more commonplace. The Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) and the National Cybersecurity Alliance (NCA) lead a collaborative effort between government and industry to raise cybersecurity awareness nationally and internationally.</p> <p>Cybersecurity Awareness Month Theme See Yourself in Cyber</p> <p>This year's campaign theme — "<i>See Yourself in Cyber</i>" — demonstrates that while cybersecurity may seem like a complex subject, ultimately, it's really all about people. This October will focus on the "people" part of cybersecurity, providing information and resources to help educate CISA partners and the public, and ensure all individuals and organizations make smart decisions whether on the job, at home or at school – now and in the future. We encourage each of you to engage in this year's efforts by creating your own cyber awareness campaigns and sharing this messaging with your peers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For individuals and families, we encourage you to See Yourself taking action to stay safe online. That means enabling basic cyber hygiene practices: update your software, think before you click, have good strong passwords or a password keeper, and enable multi-factor authentication (meaning you need "More Than A Password!") on all your sensitive accounts. • For those considering joining the cyber community, we encourage you to See Yourself joining the cyber workforce. We'll be talking with leaders from across the country about how we can build a cybersecurity workforce that is bigger, more diverse and dedicated to solving the problems that will help keep the American people safe. • For our partners in industry, we encourage you to See Yourself as part of the solution. That means putting operational collaboration into practice, working together to share information in real-time, and reducing risk and build resilience from the start to protect America's critical infrastructure and the systems that Americans rely on every day. <p>4 Things You Can Do</p> <p>Throughout October, CISA and NCA will highlight key action steps that everyone should take:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Think Before You Click: Recognize and Report Phishing: If a link looks a little off, think before you click. It could be an attempt to get sensitive information or install malware. • Update Your Software: Don't delay -- If you see a software update notification, act promptly. Better yet, turn on automatic updates. • Use Strong Passwords: Use passwords that are long, unique, and randomly generated. Use password managers to generate and remember different, complex passwords for each of your accounts. A passwords manager will encrypt passwords securing them for you! • Enable Multi-Factor Authentication: You need more than a password to protect your online accounts, and enabling MFA makes you significantly less likely to get hacked. <p>Return to Top</p>
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Terrorism, Extremism

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HEADLINE	10/04 Teen planned to attack Chicago mosque?
SOURCE	https://www.ipost.com/diaspora/antisemitism/article-718919
GIST	<p>An 18-year-old teenager from Maine who was arrested in February for possession of explosives will face terrorism and conspiracy charges for plotting to murder worshippers at mosques and synagogues, a secret FBI search warrant obtained by ABC-7 in Chicago discovered.</p> <p>The 45-page warrant detailed Xavier Pelkey's intricate plot to separate children from adults at places of worship around Chicago – starting with a prominent mosque in the city. Pelkey, along with a 15-year-old collaborator from Chicago and a 17-year-old from Kentucky, plotted a mass shooting at an identified Chicago-area Shia mosque in late March.</p>

	<p>"They planned to enter the mosque, separate the adults from the children, and then kill all the adults. If at that point, law enforcement had not intervened, they planned to travel to another Shia mosque or possibly a Synagogue and do the same thing. They would continue until they were shot and killed by law enforcement," the FBI warrant alleges.</p> <p>The teen was arrested last spring and pled not guilty to the charges. While investigators involved in the arrest believed Pelkey was plotting to attack a Chicago mosque, there was not enough evidence to charge him with anything beyond possession of explosives. The new FBI findings mean the prosecution will add terrorism-related conspiracy charges to Pelkey's case.</p> <p>"It's now shaping up to be giving material support to a terrorist organization, probably conspiring with others to give support to a terrorist organization," ABC7 legal analyst Gil Soffer said. "It carries a heavier maximum penalty. It implicates national security concerns. It's more than one person, it's a conspiracy, potentially, it's a much more serious charge."</p> <p>Another potential attack thwarted</p> <p>US law enforcement has been vigilant against the rise of attacks on holy sites. The 2018 Tree of Life Synagogue shooting in Pittsburgh left 11 dead, while a 2019 shooting in a Poway, California synagogue left one dead and three injured – including the synagogue's Rabbi. The most recent incident, a hostage crisis at a Colleyville, Texas synagogue, fortunately, did not end with any victim fatalities.</p>
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HEADLINE	10/04 India bans Muslim group for terror links
SOURCE	https://www.ipost.com/middle-east/article-718917
GIST	<p>India has declared illegal the Popular Front of India (PFI), a radical Islamic group, and imposed a five-year ban on it and eight associate organizations.</p> <p>The ban is imposed under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act of the state constitution. The Popular Front and its affiliates were banned just days after law enforcement agencies launched a countrywide campaign to suppress the activities of the group.</p> <p>According to Indian sources, this was the country's largest investigative and intelligence operation against any organization so far. After imposing the ban, the Home Affairs Ministry claimed in a statement, "The Popular Front of India and its affiliates pose a major threat to internal security, integrity, and sovereignty of the country. It also cited the group's alleged link with banned Students Islamic Movement of India (SIMI), Jamaat-ul-Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB), and ISIS."</p> <p>The ministry said, "The PFI and its affiliates function as social, economic, educational and political organizations, but they are pursuing a hidden agenda of radicalizing a certain section of the society."</p> <p>Citing alleged links with international terrorist groups, the Home Affairs Ministry said, "Some members of the PFI have joined the Islamic State and participated in terrorist activities in Syria, Iraq, and Afghanistan." The Popular Front denies all these allegations.</p> <p>The Home Affairs Ministry has also banned PFI's popular student organization, the Campus Front of India, which was accused by the Karnataka government of creating controversy over the hijab issues in the Udupi district earlier this year.</p> <p>Minister of State for Home Affairs Ajay Mishra said in a statement, "Suspicious information has been received against PFI, on the basis of which law agencies are conducting raids and high-level investigations."</p> <p>Aditya Yadav, a New Delhi-based police officer, told The Media Line, "Before declaring PFI outlawed, the National Investigation Agency (ANI) conducted raids in Delhi, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Telangana, Assam, Maharashtra, and Uttar Pradesh, and at least 100 PFI workers were arrested." Yadav claimed that the agency also recovered scores of anti-state materials from the PFI office.</p>

A Kerala-based Muslim police officer told The Media Line, “The Kerala government asserted in 2012 that the PFI was a revival of the Indian Mujahideen’s affiliate, Students Islamic Movement of India (SIMI), an outlawed terrorist organization.” He also claimed, “Intelligence agencies also believed that PFI had links with al-Qaida’s Indian chapter.”

He noted, “Law enforcement agencies on Thursday launched a countrywide crackdown against PFI and arrested more than 250 of its hardcore workers.”

Barrister Asaduddin Owaisi, a leading Indian Muslim leader and a member of the Hyderabad Parliament, said in a tweet, “I always opposed PFI’s extreme & radical approach and support the democratic approach. This ban on PFI can’t be supported, as the actions of any individuals who commit crimes don’t mean that the organization itself be banned.”

In his series of tweets, Owaisi said further, “The Supreme Court of India, in one of its decisions, has also said that mere association with an organization is not enough to make someone a criminal.” However, he added, “Banning with authoritarianism like this is dangerous. Every Muslim who wants to speak will be arrested under this black law. India’s electoral autonomy is approaching fascism.”

After the central government banned PFI and its affiliated organizations, former Bihar Chief Minister Lalu Prasad Yadav told the press, “All such organizations should be banned, for they are creating a religious divide in the country.” At the same time, he also demanded a ban on Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), a Hindu extremist group.

The Indian Muslim Popular Front was formed to counter Hindu extremist groups. The group calls itself a non-governmental organization that aims to work for the poor and marginalized minorities in the country and opposes exploitation. It was formed in 2006, when the National Development Front merged with two other organizations from the south. Over the next few years, its base broadened as more Muslim organizations from across India began to merge.

The Popular Front has a large presence in Kerala and Karnataka, is active in at least 23 Indian states, and claims to have key workers in the millions. The group first came to light in 2010, when one of its members attacked Prof. TJ Joseph in Kerala.

Muslim groups alleged that Joseph had made insulting remarks about the Prophet Mohammed. The court found its member guilty of the attack, but the PFI distanced itself from the accused.

Rohit Sharma, a New Delhi-based leading security and political analyst, told The Media Line, “Till now no Indian leader or activist or any other person has been able to claim that the PFI is a spotless organization. The PFI people have been involved in propagating anti-state sentiments, which ultimately led to a feeling in the country that one particular community [Muslims] is to be blamed for anti-national sentiments and activities in the country.”

Sharma added, “PFI links with the Bangladesh-based terrorist outfit Jamaat-ul-Mujahideen was also established during the monitoring and investigation process. The PFI cadres are also accused of involvement in several terrorist acts and the murders of some prominent figures.

“Last week, investigative agencies presented solid evidence in the court which revealed that PFI’s associates were involved in radicalizing and motivating Muslim youth to join banned terrorist outfits, including ISIS.” He noted, “PFI is operational in the south, but it is also working in the north. They have established large numbers of madrassas [Islamic seminaries].” Sharma warned, “PFI workers have the potential to cause riots to break out across India.”

Abdul Basit, director-general of the Islamabad Centre for Regional Studies and a former Pakistani ambassador to Germany and high commissioner to India, told The Media Line, “Terrorism is condemnable

in all its forms and manifestations. One sincerely hopes India can substantiate with irrefutable facts what it is claiming about the PFI.”

Not to appear one-sided, Basit asked, “What about Hindu extremist groups ranging from RSS to Hindu Mahasabah, who openly incite and abet violence against Indian Muslims? What about the undeniable culpability of RSS goons in the 2007 Samjhota Express blast? And then what about Indian state terrorism against Kashmiris?”

In the war against terrorism, Basit said, “We cannot fight and exterminate terrorism and extremism through selective approaches. This is exactly what India has been doing for a long time.”

Adeeb Ul Zaman Safvi, a Karachi-based retired Pakistan Navy captain, a war veteran and a seasoned geostrategic analyst, told The Media Line, “There will be no chance of any violence or Hindu-Muslim conflict following the ban of this Muslim organization because the Indian Muslim minority has readily accepted the role of second-class citizens; hence Muslim political leadership does not push them toward an imitational political agenda.

“Furthermore, Indian media tend to ignore the human rights violations of the [Narendra] Modi-led RSS ideology [Hindu extremism], so the central government utilizes state terrorism to scare the minorities into subjugation.”

Safvi claimed, “Among the regional countries, only Pakistan could raise the issue of violation of basic human rights, freedom of speech or state terrorism against minorities, but it could raise the tension between the two neighboring nuclear states. However, Pakistan is in deep political mayhem and economic crises of its own. No other country in the region intends to raise this issue in the international arena.”

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HEADLINE	10/03 Military: al-Shabab leader killed in strike
SOURCE	https://www.swissinfo.ch/eng/reuters/u-s--military-says-it-killed-al-shabaab-leader-in-somali-air-strike/47948972
GIST	<p>BOSASO, Somalia (Reuters) -The U.S. military said it killed a leader of the Islamist militant al-Shabaab group with an air strike in Somalia over the weekend, while the insurgents claimed responsibility for a new attack.</p> <p>Somalia's government said the leader was one of the co-founders of the al-Qaeda linked movement that has killed tens of thousands of people in bombings since 2006.</p> <p>It named him as Abdullahi Nadir, al-Shabaab's chief prosecutor, who it said had been in line to replace the group's ailing leader, Ahmed Diriye. There was no immediate comment on the strike from al-Shabaab.</p> <p>Nadir's "death is a thorn removed from the Somali nation," Somalia's information ministry said.</p> <p>"The government is grateful to the Somali people and international friends whose cooperation facilitated the killing of this leader who was an enemy of the Somali nation."</p> <p>The U.S. Africa Command said it carried out the air strike near Jilib, about 370 km (230 miles) southwest in the capital Mogadishu on Saturday.</p> <p>Somali security forces - who are backed by U.S. troops and drones and an African Union peacekeeping mission - have touted gains made in recent weeks against al Shabaab.</p> <p>But the militants - who are fighting to overthrow the Western-backed government and implement their interpretation of Islamic law - have continued to conduct deadly raids, including two on Friday that killed at least 16 people.</p>

	<p>On Monday, two car bombs exploded in the central city of Beledweyne, killing at least 20 people and injuring many others, the state news agency reported.</p> <p>A third car bomb was blown up by security forces without causing any further casualties, three residents said.</p> <p>Al Shabaab claimed responsibility for the attack which its military operations spokesman said killed dozens of people, including officials and soldiers.</p> <p>Somalia's President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud, elected by lawmakers in May, has promised to take the fight to the insurgents after three years in which his predecessor, consumed by political infighting, took little action against al-Shabaab.</p>
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HEADLINE	10/03 Al-Shabab attacks govt HQ bldg.; 20 dead
SOURCE	https://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/al-shabab-attack-kills-12-people-somali-city-90914351
GIST	<p>MOGADISHU, Somalia -- Islamic extremist fighters on Monday targeted the local Somali government headquarters in the Hiran region, leaving 20 people dead and 36 wounded in a town at the center of a recent mobilization against the extremists, officials and witnesses said.</p> <p>The Somalia-based al-Shabab claimed responsibility for the attack in Beledweyne, a town more than 300 kilometers (186 miles) north of Somalia's capital, Mogadishu.</p> <p>Somalia's government earlier Monday announced that it and international partners had killed a top al-Shabab leader, Abdullahi Nadir, over the weekend. The U.S. military said it conducted an airstrike on Saturday in southwest Somalia but didn't name the al-Shabab leader killed.</p> <p>The Hiran governor, Ali Jayte Osman, who survived Monday's attack, told The Associated Press that the health minister of Hirshabelle state and the deputy governor of Hiran in charge of finance were among those killed in Monday's attack. At least 36 others were hurt.</p> <p>"The first explosion occurred at the entrance gate, and after a few minutes a big truck rushed toward the headquarters building and exploded, killing many civilians who came to the office to receive services," the governor said. "This attack was carried out by cowards, but their brutal acts will never distract from the public uprising against them."</p> <p>He said the attack badly damaged the administration's headquarters.</p> <p>U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres condemned the attack and reaffirmed the U.N.'s commitment "to work with regional and other international actors in supporting the people and government of Somalia on their path toward a peaceful Somalia," U.N. spokesman Stephane Dujarric said.</p> <p>Witness Elmi Hassan told the AP that a truck laden with explosives rammed the government headquarters around 10:00 a.m.</p> <p>"I have seen with my own eyes several bodies that were discovered from the wreckage of the attack, human flesh scattered on the ground," he said.</p> <p>The police commissioner of Beledweyne, Bishar Hussein Jimale, said the attack occurred at the Lama-Galaay military camp that also serves as the government headquarters.</p> <p>"What happened here today is a disaster that killed many innocent people, including government officials, civilians and security personnel," he said.</p> <p>Despite the attack, some residents remained defiant as efforts continued in the region to seize communities back from al-Shabab control.</p>

	“We will not be intimidated by this and we will not stay away from our battle against the terrorists. We will fight until the end, until we defeat you,” resident Hassan Ali said.
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Suspicious, Unusual

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HEADLINE	10/03 UN chief: world ‘life-or-death struggle’
SOURCE	https://apnews.com/article/g-20-summit-science-pakistan-united-nations-antonio-guterres-9a885115f41bff19ac6917ec5011b1c1
GIST	<p>UNITED NATIONS (AP) — U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres warned Monday that the world is in “a life-or-death struggle” for survival as “climate chaos gallops ahead” and accused the world’s 20 wealthiest countries of failing to do enough to stop the planet from overheating.</p> <p>The U.N. chief said emissions of global-warming greenhouse gases are at an all-time high and rising, and it’s time for “a quantum level compromise” between rich developed countries that emitted most of the heat-trapping gases and emerging economies that often feel its worst effects.</p> <p>Guterres spoke as government representatives opened a meeting in Congo’s capital Kinshasa to prepare for the major U.N.-led climate conference in the Egyptian resort of Sharm el-Sheikh in November. It’s a time of immense climate impacts around the world — from floods that put one-third of Pakistan under water and Europe’s hottest summer in 500 years to hurricanes and typhoons that have hammered the Philippines, Cuba and the U.S. state of Florida.</p> <p>In the last few weeks, Guterres has amped up a push for climate’s version of asking polluters pay for what they’ve done, usually called “loss and damage,” and he said Monday that people need action now.</p> <p>“Failure to act on loss and damage will lead to more loss of trust and more climate damage. This is a moral imperative that cannot be ignored.”</p> <p>Guterres said the COP27 meeting in Egypt “must be the place for action on loss and damage.”</p> <p>In unusually critical language, he said commitments by the so-called G20 group of the world’s 20 leading economies “are coming far too little, and far too late.”</p> <p>Guterres warned that current pledges and policies “are shutting the door on our chances to limit global temperature rise to 2 degrees Celsius, let alone meet the 1.5 degree goal.”</p> <p>“We are in a life-or-death struggle for our own safety today and our survival tomorrow,” he said.</p> <p>“COP27 is the place for all countries -- led by the G20 -- to show they are in this fight, and in it together,” Guterres said. “And the best way to show it is by showing up at COP27 in Sharm el-Sheikh.”</p> <p>Rich countries, especially the United States, have emitted far more than their share of heat-trapping carbon dioxide from the burning of coal, oil and natural gas, data shows. Poor nations like Pakistan and Cuba have been hurt far more than their share of global carbon emissions.</p> <p>Loss and damage has been talked about for years, but richer nations have often balked at negotiating details about paying for past climate disasters, like Pakistan’s flooding this summer.</p> <p>The issue is fundamental for the world’s developing countries and Guterres is reminding rich nations “that they cannot try and brush it under the carpet ... G20 nations have to take responsibility for the great need</p>

	<p>their actions have caused,” said Mohamed Adow of Power Shift Africa, which tries to mobilize climate action in Africa.</p> <p>Princeton University climate science and international affairs professor Michael Oppenheimer said in an email that if high-income and other big emitters like China want the U.N. convention on climate change to remain useful, “they will need to grapple seriously with loss and damage.”</p> <p>Otherwise, he said, negotiations “are headed for interminable gridlock.”</p> <p>Poor countries with low emissions can simply refuse to discuss anything else until the issue is resolved, Oppenheimer said. Richer countries may find a way around the issue without paying for direct damage by paying poorer nations more to adapt to lessen future disasters, but even then developed nations will have to pay out money, not just make promises as they have in the past, he said.</p> <p>Guterres’ remarks “highlight what small islands and least developed countries have been arguing for decades — that loss and damage is irrefutable and already disproportionately affecting the most vulnerable countries and communities,” said Adelle Thomas, a climate scientist from the Bahamas.</p> <p>“We are reaching a breaking point, where developed countries must respond instead of continuing to delay action with empty promises and prolonged discussions,” she added.</p>
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HEADLINE	10/04 Car-buyers beware: flood damaged vehicles
SOURCE	https://www.foxbusiness.com/lifestyle/hurricane-ian-insurance-crime-experts-warning-car-buyers-flood-damaged-vehicles
GIST	<p>Hurricane Ian flooded an untold number of vehicles when it hit Florida and other southern states last week, and experts are warning unsuspecting car-buyers against the heightened risk of fraud as those cars may soon appear for sale across the U.S. — with no disclosure of the damage.</p> <p>The National Insurance Crime Bureau (NICB), a nonprofit that works to combat and prevent insurance crime, says that in the wake of major flood events, scammers will emerge and buy up water-ravaged cars and try to resell them as undamaged vehicles.</p> <p>It is too soon to know how many cars were damaged by Hurricane Ian, but the risk of fraud could be even greater following the deadly storm than in times past.</p> <p>"We anticipate a significant amount of flooded-out vehicles to be cleaned up and then resold either in the state of Florida or probably in other states, which is very common," NICB president and CEO David Glawe told FOX Business, pointing to the high demand and low supply of vehicles in the U.S. market.</p> <p>With the cost of used vehicles up nearly 40% since 2019, Glawe said, selling flooded-out cars is incredibly profitable and, therefore, an attractive scheme for crooks.</p> <p>He noted, "The market's good, and this is just another opportunity for criminal enterprises to pay for these vehicles in Florida that have been lost and then ship them up and resell them in other states."</p> <p>The NICB says consumers should be on the lookout for any potential hidden flood damage when shopping for used vehicles by checking for signs of water damage on vehicle carpeting, upholstery or seat belts. Other red flags are rusty screws or other metal parts, mud or signs of submergence in the engine department or under the dashboard, and any problems with the operation of electrical components.</p> <p>The most important thing a buyer should do is enter a car's vehicle identification number (VIN) into the NICB's VINCheck database to investigate whether a car was declared as salvage or a "total loss" from flooding. But there will only be a record if a claim was turned in to an insurance company.</p>

	<p>Flooded vehicles that are uninsured at the time of damage will not have documented evidence in the VINCheck system and can, therefore, be cleaned up and sold by unscrupulous owners without disclosing the damage. Some scammers might even sell such vehicles in states far away from Ian's path of destruction, where buyers may be less likely to suspect flood damage.</p> <p>NICB data shows that more than 422,000 vehicles were reported damaged due to Hurricane Harvey and more than 215,000 from Hurricane Irma in 2017. A quarter-million vehicles were damaged by Hurricane Sandy in 2012 and roughly 300,000 from Hurricane Katrina in 2005. And those numbers just include claims made to insurance companies.</p> <p>Glawe says the organization estimates there will be roughly \$6 billion in criminal fraud committed in Florida in the wake of Ian.</p> <p>"We're not at the level of Katrina," he said, "but this will be the largest event, I believe, in Florida history."</p>
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Crime, Criminals

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HEADLINE	10/03 Arrest: threatening online posts to school
SOURCE	https://www.kiro7.com/news/local/arrest-made-after-classes-canceled-monday-students-aberdeen-school-district-due-threats/TX33SPWWMFGTRCUMFYBDGYT2IY/
GIST	<p>School was canceled for all students in the Aberdeen School District on Monday due to online threats, Superintendent Jeffrey Thake announced Sunday evening. After-school activities and sports were also canceled.</p> <p>On Monday, Aberdeen identified a young male from Grays Harbor as a suspect after threatening posts were posted on one of Aberdeen High School's social media accounts.</p> <p>The suspect, who does not attend Aberdeen schools, was taken into custody Monday morning.</p> <p>"Posting threatening statements is not acceptable and it's against the law," Thake said. "The safety of our students and staff is our highest priority. We take threats seriously and I am grateful to the Aberdeen Police Department for launching an investigation right away and working with us to identify the suspect."</p> <p>According to police, the investigation began Sunday with posts on the Aberdeen High School TikTok account saying, "I'm bringing a gun to school on Monday," and "Don't go to school on Monday."</p> <p>Thake said the district is also concerned about the mental health of its students and staff and wants any students who might be experiencing anxiety due to the messages to contact their school counselor or a trusted adult.</p> <p>All schools will resume normal operations on Tuesday, Oct. 4.</p>
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HEADLINE	10/03 Postal workers in fraud, ID theft conspiracy
SOURCE	https://www.upi.com/Top_News/US/2022/10/03/postal-workers-arrested-fraud-identity-theft-conspiracy/5601664829647/
GIST	Oct. 3 (UPI) -- Three U.S. postal workers, in New York and New Jersey, have been arrested for allegedly stealing credit cards from the mail in a conspiracy to buy luxury items to sell online, according to the Department of Justice.

The department announced the arrests of three postal workers, and a fourth person, in connection with a 4-year, \$1.3 million fraud and identity theft scheme, according to a [federal indictment](#) unsealed in New York.

"As alleged, the defendants engaged in a years-long scheme to manipulate credit card companies and major retailers across New York and New Jersey by stealing credit cards and using those cards to purchase, and subsequently sell, luxury goods," U.S. Attorney [Damian Williams said in a statement](#) Thursday.

"The defendants took advantage of the public trust we place in U.S. Postal Service employees for their own financial gain."

U.S. postal workers Nathanael Foucault, Johnathan Persaud, Fabiola Mompoin and civilian Devon Richards, in addition to five other people who have not been arrested, face charges that include Conspiracy to Commit Access Device Fraud, Access Device Fraud and Aggravated Identity Theft charges. Each face lengthy prison sentences if convicted.

"These nine defendants, three of which are postal employees, sought to enrich themselves by stealing mail directly from hundreds of postal customers," U.S. Postal Inspection Service Inspector-in-Charge Daniel Brubaker said in a statement.

"They further compounded their crimes by committing identity theft against those customers to facilitate their elaborate scheme to defraud several national financial institutions."

According to the department, those "involved in the conspiracy" stole credit cards from the mail and activated the cards using stolen personally identifiable information. Other members of the conspiracy used the stolen cards to purchase luxury goods from high-end retailers, such as Chanel, Fendi, Hermes and Dior, and sold them on [LuxurySnob.com](#).

The website calls itself an "online consignment and personal shopping company" specializing in "pre-owned luxury items," but actually sells many items purchased using stolen credit cards, according to the DOJ.

"The conduct alleged is disgraceful," USPS-OIG Special Agent-in-Charge Matthew Modafferi said. "Our office will continue to vigorously investigate postal service employees and their co-conspirators who violate the public's trust."

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HEADLINE	10/03 King Co. prosecutes more cases in Seattle
SOURCE	https://komonews.com/news/local/downtown-seattle-a-lot-better-as-king-co-prosecutors-office-files-more-cases
GIST	<p>For months, a problematic stretch of 3rd Avenue in downtown Seattle has been plagued with open-air drug dealing.</p> <p>Now, dozens are facing consequences after the King County Prosecutor's Office said it's the results of more prosecutions and cases being investigated by Seattle police.</p> <p>It's much quieter on 3rd Avenue between Pine and Pike streets compared to what many who often walk in the area said they've seen in the past.</p> <p>"I feel like it's a lot better," James Xavier said. "People are more able to come into the shops, actually do what they do need to do, like shop and stuff."</p> <p>For months on this stretch, it wasn't unusual to see open air drug use. It has also been an area that has seen several shootings this year.</p>

With the help of emphasis patrols by the Seattle Police Department, the King County Prosecutor's Office has filed 35 felony drug dealing cases from the start of the 2022 through the end of August. Those are against 33 defendants.

Of the 35 drug dealing charges:

- 24 involve fentanyl
- 6 involve meth
- 4 involve crack
- 1 involves heroin

Of the 10 cases that also have a gun charge:

- 7 involve only a fentanyl charge
- 1 involves fentanyl and meth charges
- 1 involves only a meth charge
- 1 involves only a heroin charge

"If someone is dealing fentanyl, anywhere in King County, particularly 3rd and Pike, you can expect a felony charge," Casey McNerthney of the King County Prosecutor's Office said.

International Cigar and Tobacco has been on this block for more than two decades. The former owner, Amir Yousuf, recently sold it after he said he saw a jump in drug use and violent crime outside his window.

"Although I'm not there, business is still there," Yousuf said. "There are so many other small businesses there; I hope they will keep pushing for improvement."

This comes at a time when Seattle City Council recently voted to move forward with plans to revamp 3rd Avenue, making it pedestrian friendly and bringing in more stores.

Yousuf supports the plan only if there's a strong focus on increasing safety.

"I think it's a good idea," Yousuf said. "Make it more friendly for the people to walk around, good for business, good for the city."

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HEADLINE	10/03 Bomb parts in hotel after deadly shooting
SOURCE	https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/03/nyregion/poughkeepsie-hotel-shooting-marist-college.html
GIST	<p>After the father of a Marist College student was shot to death in the lobby of a hotel in Poughkeepsie, N.Y., on Sunday morning, officers made an alarming discovery: They found bomb-making components in the room booked by the two men charged in connection with the killing.</p> <p>Further investigation of the room at the Courtyard by Marriott turned up handbooks with instructions on creating explosives, and the police quickly evacuated the hotel and broadened their search, officials said.</p> <p>The victim, whose name the police did not immediately provide, had a child at Marist, which is less than five miles from the hotel, and had been staying at the hotel during the school's family weekend, an event that included a football game, music performance and picnic.</p> <p>He was treated at the scene of the shooting and then taken to a hospital, where he was pronounced dead.</p> <p>"This unspeakable violence in the lobby of a hotel shakes the very conscience of a community," the chief assistant district attorney, Matthew Weishaupt, said at a news conference on Monday afternoon.</p>

No other victims or actual explosives were discovered at the hotel on South Road, and so far law enforcement officials have said little about what prompted the shooting and what else they believe the men they arrested were planning.

Police officials said on Monday that several shots had been fired, and that they were still investigating the events that had led to the shooting. "The suspect did not know the victim," Chief Joseph Cavaliere of the Poughkeepsie Police Department said at the press briefing. "This, we believe, is a random act."

A team of officers initially responded to a call of a disturbance and shots fired at the hotel around 7:30 a.m. Sunday.

One of the first officers on the scene saw a man — who was later identified as Devin M. Taylor, 26, of Dutchess County — running into the courtyard of the hotel and chased him. Police officials said Mr. Taylor reached into a fanny pack and threw a handgun away before the officer arrested him at gunpoint.

Another officer then spotted the second man — who was later identified by police as Roy A. Johnson Jr., 35 — of Dutchess County, coming down a hallway from the outside parking lot, police officials said. He, too, was taken into custody.

Mr. Johnson was charged with second-degree murder and criminal possession of a weapon in the second degree. He is being held without bail. Mr. Taylor was charged with two counts of criminal possession of a weapon in the second degree. His bail was set at \$500,000 cash, \$1 million bond, or \$5 million partially secured bond.

Both men have prior felony convictions. Mr. Johnson previously served time for burglary and robbery. Mr. Taylor has one previous felony conviction for burglary.

A spokesman for Marist College, Anthony Proia, said in an email on Monday, "Our deepest condolences go out to the family, and we are offering the full support of the Marist community."

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HEADLINE	10/03 Seattle mayor: shootings 'a wake-up call'
SOURCE	https://komonews.com/news/local/everyone-should-be-concerned-mayor-harrell-reacts-to-violent-weekend-in-seattle#
GIST	<p>SEATTLE, Wash. — Investigators are looking for answers in multiple shootings across Seattle from over the weekend.</p> <p>At least five people were hurt in shootings in the city from Friday evening to Monday morning.</p> <p>Four of the victims are students at the University of Washington. They were shot following a fight outside a bar in the U-district in the early morning hours Sunday.</p> <p>That shooting happened roughly 24 hours after another shooting in the U district where a person was killed by a vehicle believed to be fleeing the scene.</p> <p>Early Monday morning, Seattle Police swarmed the intersection of 7th Ave NE and Denny Way after a report of shots fired. A law enforcement source tells KOMO news that officers recovered at least 50 shell casings from multiple different weapons.</p> <p>"By my experience, it sounded like rifles. It sounded very loud," said Edgar Avilas, who is staying in the area with family on vacation. "I didn't expect anything like this."</p> <p>Seattle Police indicated they had reports someone was shooting from a vehicle, but nobody was hit. A door of an apartment at 699 John Street appeared to be shattered from gunfire.</p>

Return to Top	<p>On Monday, Seattle Mayor Bruce Harrell called the shootings a ‘wake-up call’.</p> <p>“We don’t need more wake-up calls, these are wake-up calls that we have to invest in public safety. We have to have everyone safe – we have too many guns in the wrong hands,” Harrell told KOMO news. “Everyone should be concerned about it and certainly I am.”</p> <p>Harrell said he has been briefed by Seattle Police Chief Adrian Diaz about the investigations into the different shootings.</p> <p>“There’s some information he has shared with me that wouldn’t be good for public consumption, but they are on top of it doing investigations,” Harrell said.</p> <p>He added that the city administration is working with officials from the University of Washington to respond to the weekend shootings in the U-District.</p> <p>“We have to defer to the university and their police system, but we’re in discussion with them about what can be done immediately to keep everyone safe,” Harrell said.</p> <p>Tremayne Edwards of Seattle-based Alliance for Gun Responsibility said it's important to not feel numb or helpless after acts of gun violence in the community.</p> <p>“We still have to fight back against that - we might feel like nothing will every change. We have to combat that mindset. Unfortunately, that’s something with this very American epidemic of gun violence in our country, sometimes it often feels we often just respond with thoughts and prayers," Edwards said.</p>
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HEADLINE	10/03 PCSD: arrests of teens in carjacking, chase
SOURCE	https://komonews.com/news/local/two-teens-arrested-after-allegedly-carjacking-a-woman-leading-police-on-a-pursuit-spanaway-pierce-county-sheriffs-office#
GIST	<p>SPANAWAY, Wash. — Three teens are in custody after they reportedly carjacked a woman and lead police on a chase Friday night in Spanaway.</p> <p>According to the Pierce County Sheriff's Department, the teens pulled their car behind a woman as she was arriving home, held her at gunpoint, and demanded her car keys. Deputies said the woman didn't immediately cooperate and one of the suspects allegedly hit her in the head with the gun. They then got into the woman's SUV and drove off along with the vehicle they arrived in.</p> <p>KOMO News obtained new surveillance video Monday showing the victim’s car pull into her Spanaway home, then the suspects car following behind her. The suspects are seen jumping out of their car, then moments later, they speed off with their car and the victim’s stolen car.</p> <p>Deputies then found the SUV and the teens' car at a nearby gas station. They attempted to contact the teens but they drove off so the officers chased them because they had probable cause a violent crime involving a gun occurred.</p> <p>“The actions we’re seeing and the crimes we’re seeing are increasingly becoming more dangerous,” said Deputy Carly Cappelto. “Because it is an armed robbery it is one of the pursuable offenses otherwise, we would have had to end the pursuit and the suspects would be outstanding.”</p> <p>The sheriff's office says the two vehicles went in separate directions. The driver of the SUV attempted to pass traffic near the intersection of 94th Ave E and 128th St E but hit another vehicle. Both the driver and passenger were apprehended.</p> <p>The occupants of the vehicle the teens originally arrived it got out of the vehicle in the 7400 block of 176th St E. The driver didn't put the vehicle in park and deputies say it rolled backward into a patrol car.</p>

	<p>One of the occupants of the car was found during a K9 track.</p> <p>The sheriff's office said three 16-year-olds were arrested and booked into Remann Hall. Their charges include robbery in the first degree, assault in the first degree, felony eluding and resisting arrest.</p> <p>According to the sheriff's office, a mother of one of the suspects told deputies that her son had recently been arrested for a similar incident and was on house arrest.</p> <p>“They know what they can get away with,” said Cappetto. “And I think that’s what we’re seeing, and a lot of the crimes were seeing. We’re seeing these juveniles who think these behaviors are going to go without consequences.”</p> <p>Deputies are investigating if two other teenagers who have not been arrested were involved in the crime spree.</p>
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HEADLINE	10/03 Renton mini-mart drive-by shooting
SOURCE	https://www.kiro7.com/news/local/2-injured-shooting-mini-mart-renton/GWUG54X6PNH5ZHZMIKBJQEU3YA/
GIST	<p>RENTON, Wash. — An investigation is underway after two men were injured in a shooting Monday night in Renton.</p> <p>Officers were called at 8:47 p.m. to the 200 block of Rainier Avenue.</p> <p>Police said one man was taken to Harborview Medical Center after being shot at an ampm mini-mart.</p> <p>The other man was also shot at the ampm but fled toward McDonald’s, where he flagged down a King County deputy in the area. The victim was treated at the scene for a gunshot wound.</p> <p>The extent of both victims’ injuries is unknown.</p> <p>Police said a car pulled up at the ampm and someone inside fired shots before the car fled.</p> <p>The investigation is ongoing.</p>
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HEADLINE	10/03 UW: gun violence ‘public health crisis’
SOURCE	https://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/law-justice/4-injured-in-university-district-shooting-were-uw-students/
GIST	<p>Four University of Washington students are expected to survive injuries sustained in a shooting outside of a popular bar near campus early Sunday. In reaction, UW and Seattle city leaders and students are decrying a general increase in crime in the University District.</p> <p>UW President Ana Mari Cauce on Sunday called gun violence a “public health crisis” in a news release and said UW is working with the city of Seattle and the Seattle Police Department to address “root causes behind the increase in personal and property crime in the University District.”</p> <p>“No one should have to fear for their safety as they go about their daily lives,” she said.</p> <p>The shooting occurred around 1 a.m. Sunday in the 4300 block of University Way near the popular Flowers Bar & Restaurant. According to Seattle police, two men began to fight outside the bar when one pulled out a gun, fired three to five rounds and fled.</p>

The victims, ages 19 and 20, were taken to Harborview Medical Center with non-life-threatening injuries. As of Monday evening, one was in satisfactory condition and three had been released, according to hospital spokesperson Susan Gregg.

Acknowledging that “events like this are life-changing” regardless of the severity of the physical injuries, Cauce said UW has reached out to the students affected and other students in the vicinity to provide support and resources.

Seattle City Councilmember Alex Pedersen, whose district includes the University District, said in a statement that gun violence is at “unacceptable levels” in the neighborhood. With the opening of the light rail station and returning students, Pedersen said “the U District is at a pivotal moment to solidify a renaissance that can benefit all of Seattle.”

People are still processing the events that unfolded early Sunday, UW Student Body President Timothy Billing said Monday.

Concern for the injured students and those who were affected by the shooting is palpable, he said, adding that the most important thing people can do immediately is show up as a community

“We’re just thankful they’re OK,” he said.

The shooting occurred one block away from campus, leaving some new students wondering if they made the right choice to attend UW, Billing said. Students hope to hear from UW officials about their specific plans to increase student safety, and support expanding existing resources such as NightRide Shuttle, a service that provides a safe commute for students.

Plans for UW officials to work with SPD have caused concerns for marginalized communities facing overpolicing or feeling unsafe, Billing said, adding it is a complicated situation and students want to see efforts that increase safety but do not put these communities at risk.

Freshman Jocelyne Booth said it’s common to see police cars or ambulances in the University District and on campus. Many have grown accustomed to grim scenes, including students who rely on light rail, or hang out late at bars in the popular University Way area, she said.

Some students Monday expressed feeling a lack of safety when having to commute from campus to other parts of Seattle. Freshman Layla Yared said crime was not necessarily the reason she was made to feel unsafe late at night on occasion, but rather her unfamiliarity with the city.

For UW senior Sofia Gerard, who lives in a building on University Way Avenue, it hasn’t felt less safe in comparison to last year or downtown Seattle.

Personal risk is low, she said. Urban areas face more crime than suburban neighborhoods, Gerard said. The population of a neighborhood needs to be taken into account when crime rates are being discussed, she added.

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HEADLINE	10/03 Unusual levels threats to election workers
SOURCE	https://www.cbsnews.com/news/election-worker-threats-7-states/
GIST	<p>Seven states across the country continue to see unusual levels of threats to election workers, senior FBI officials said in a briefing Monday.</p> <p>Those states are Arizona, Colorado, Georgia, Michigan, Pennsylvania, Nevada and Wisconsin — all states where the 2020 election results were questioned, officials noted. President Biden won each of those states.</p> <p>FBI officials are discussing how to deal with these threats as state officials in 8,800 election districts prepare for the midterm elections next month.</p>

Since June 2021, the FBI has received more than 1,000 tips concerning threats to election workers, according to the agency. Roughly 11% of those tips have led to FBI investigations.

FBI officials say a majority of the threats appear through emails, on election-related websites and in phone calls, while a smaller portion of threats are made in person.

Federal law enforcement officials continue to watch out for "foreign malign influence" campaigns by adversaries, as they have since 2016. Senior FBI officials said Russia and China remain the "prime culprits." That said, federal investigators are not aware of any cyber campaigns targeting elections at this time.

The country's top election security official broke down in a recent interview as she discussed the vitriol targeting election officials.

"It's unnerving," Kim Wyman, the senior election lead at the nation's Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA), [told CBS News in her first TV interview](#) since accepting her new role. "Threats like 'we're going to hang you.' And 'I hope somebody puts a bullet in your head.'"

CBS News cybersecurity expert and analyst and former director of the CISA Chris Krebs [said threats against election workers need more attention](#).

"We do need local law enforcement, I think to get more involved in investigating threats, protecting election workers themselves, ensuring that they're not being doxed, or their public information or their personal contact information is being released so they can get- so they get more threats," Krebs said on CBS News "Face the Nation" in an interview that aired Sunday.

"So this is an area that I think Congress needs take a hard look at, are the right deterrence measures in place from criminal statutes," Krebs continued. "And then do we have the investigation techniques? It is, you know, I personally have received a significant number of death threats and other-other threats. And some of them come in through anonymous- through anonymous means like protonmail. We do need more attention on these threats. Otherwise, we're going to see a shortage of election workers."

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HEADLINE	10/03 Ecuador prison clash: 15 dead, 20 injured
SOURCE	https://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/ecuador-prison-clash-leaves-15-dead-20-injured-90954958
GIST	<p>QUITO, Ecuador -- A clash between inmates armed with guns and knives inside the Latacunga prison in central Ecuador on Monday left at least 15 people dead and 20 injured, authorities said.</p> <p>Officials attributed the fighting to national and international drug trafficking groups which have turned the Andean nation's prisons into the scene of repeated massacres as the groups fight for power and drug distribution rights.</p> <p>Ecuador's national penitentiary service confirmed the death toll in the Latacunga prison, located 50 miles (80 kilometers) south of the capital of Quito. Agents are still searching the prison's pavilions for bodies.</p> <p>Videos in which gunfire and the screams of inmates can be heard were posted on social media.</p> <p>Some 316 inmates were killed inside Ecuador's prisons last year, according to the penitentiary service. So far this year there have been 90 deaths. The worst massacre took place in September of last year in the Litoral Penitentiary in Guayaquil, where 125 prisoners were killed.</p> <p>Ecuador's prison system is designed for about 30,000 people, but some 35,000 inmates were held in 53 state prisons as of last month.</p>
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